

What the
Living
Can do for the
Dead

According to the Qur'ān and Sunna and the
Opinions of the Classical Scholars of Islam

S H A H R U L H U S S A I N



*In the name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
All praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and
blessings be upon His Messenger Muḥammad,
Mercy to the Worlds.*

For my father

TRANSLITERATION KEY

ء (A slight catch in the breath. It is also used to indicate where the <i>hamza</i> has been dropped from the beginning of a word.)	ع 'a, 'i, 'u (Pronounced from the throat.)
ا a, ā	غ gh (Pronounced like a throaty French <i>r</i> with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)
ب b	ف f
ت t	ق q (A guttural <i>q</i> sound with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)
ث th (Should be pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>thin</i> or <i>thirst</i> .)	ك k
ج j	ل l
ح ḥ (Tensely breathed <i>h</i> sound.)	م m
خ kh (Pronounced like the <i>ch</i> in Scottish <i>loch</i> with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	ن n
د d	و w, ū, u.
ذ dh (Should be pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>this</i> or <i>that</i> .)	ه h
ر r	ي y, ī, i
ز z	☞ <i>Ṣalla 'Llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> —used following the mention of the Messenger Muḥammad, translated as, "May Allāh bless him and give him peace."
س s	☞ <i>'Alayhi 'l-salām</i> —used following the mention of a prophet or messenger of Allāh, translated as, "Upon him be peace."
ش sh	☞ <i>Raḍiya 'Llāhu 'anhū</i> —used following the mention of a Companion of the Messenger ☞, translated as, "May Allāh be pleased with him."
ص ṣ (A heavy <i>s</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	☞ <i>Raḍiya 'Llāhu 'anhā</i> —used following the mention of a female Companion of the Messenger ☞, translated as, "May Allāh be pleased with her."
ض ḍ (A heavy <i>d/dh</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	
ط ṭ (A heavy <i>t</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	
ظ ḏ (A heavy <i>dh</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the	

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TRANSLITERATION KEY

ء (al)	' (A slight catch in the breath. It is also used to indicate where the <i>hamza</i> has been dropped from the beginning of a word.)	ع	' , 'a, 'i, 'u (Pronounced from the throat.)
ا	a, ā	غ	gh (Pronounced like a throaty French <i>r</i> with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)
ب	b	ف	f
ت	t	ق	q (A guttural <i>q</i> sound with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)
ث	th (Should be pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>thin</i> or <i>thirst</i> .)	ك	k
ج	j	ل	l
ح	h (Tensely breathed <i>h</i> sound.)	م	m
خ	kh (Pronounced like the <i>ch</i> in Scottish <i>loch</i> with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	ن	n
د	d	و	w, ū, u.
ذ	dh (Should be pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>this</i> or <i>that</i> .)	ه	h
ر	r	ي	y, ī, i
ز	z	س	<i>Ṣalla 'Llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> —used following the mention of the Messenger Muḥammad, translated as, "May Allāh bless him and give him peace."
س	s	ش	<i>'Alayhi 'l-salām</i> —used following the mention of a prophet or messenger of Allāh, translated as, "Upon him be peace."
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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allāh, who is unique in the majesty of His essence and the perfection of His attributes, and who is free from all blemishes and defects. Peace and blessing be upon Muḥammad, the final Prophet of Allāh and upon his family and Companions.

Exalted is He who holds all control in His hands; who has power over all things; who created death and life to test you and reveal which of you does best (Q 67:1-2).

The spread of Islam into non-Muslim territories and the subsequent conversion to Islam by the populace created a phenomenon perhaps not anticipated by the early Muslims who had come to the new territories to teach Islam. The phenomenon we are talking about is the inadvertent fusion of culture with religion. It is reasonable to argue that without design culture naturally found itself creeping into aspects of religion. It is not that Islam opposes culture, but it is difficult to envisage that the new Muslims would have completely left the culture of their birth and adopted a completely new set of cultural practices from the very day of their conversion to Islam.

Although there are areas that allow scholastic *ijtihād* (or reasoning), the teachings of Islam regarding what is lawful and what is unlawful are crystal clear. What is unclear is the stage at which cultural practices start to be dressed as religious rites. Hence, sometimes cultural practices are validated according to certain scholarly opinions. For example, the practice of celebrating the birth or death anniversary of a saint (*walī*) is sometimes justified by citing the validity of celebrating the Prophet's birthday ﷺ (*mawlid*). It is well established that the early generations of Muslims did not celebrate

the Prophet's birthday. It was introduced later into Muslim societies and was subsequently endorsed by many scholars. Some have then gone on to use these endorsements to justify celebrating the birthdays of other Prophets and religious figures too. Therefore, it is such cultural practices that are justified based on an over-extension of scholarly opinion that are witnessed during and after funerals.

The loss of a family member is most definitely an emotional affair. When emotions are high and tensions are elevated it is very difficult to control the environment, especially when this is coupled with a dearth of Islamic knowledge. It is usually at this time that un-Islamic activities are most likely to occur. However, the intention behind these un-Islamic activities is not entirely blameworthy. The living friends and relatives, through their misguided love, really want to do something beneficial for the deceased. Motivated by their desire to help their departed loved ones, it often leads them to engage in unsanctioned activities, which help neither the dead, nor the living.

The aim of this book is to help and guide the reader in performing rituals that are not only beneficial to the deceased, but more importantly, concordant with the teachings of Islam. According to some jurists, there are also certain mandatory duties that heirs must perform on behalf of their deceased. This small treatise is a practical guide to help heirs understand what they can do to help their departed loved ones based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunna as elucidated by the qualified opinions of the classical jurists.

There are three main parts to this treatise. The first section deals with what heirs should do for the deceased immediately after death. It discusses the rites of preparing the body for burial and the procedure of the funeral prayer according to all four Sunnī schools of thought. It also discusses other important issues related to burial, such as transporting the body abroad, placing a headstone on the grave and the like. The second part discusses what the heirs can do after burial. It discusses, among many things, the rites of visiting the grave and posthumous donation of reward (*iṣāl al-thawāb*). The third and final part deals with what heirs can do if the deceased has

any outstanding mandatory acts of worship, such as unperformed *ṣalāt*, *zakāt* and *hajj*, and unpaid debts.

Each section of this book is amply illustrated by quotations from the Qur'an and Sunna of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, and further explanations as conveyed in the statements of the classical jurists of Islam. I have discussed the issues in this book in a simple and easy manner. Each topic is discussed in such a way that it shares the opinions of the four schools of thought. It is highly advised that readers follow their own school of thought, if they have one.

It should be noted that meticulous care was taken in referencing this work. I started to work on it while in Egypt and Morocco and finally completed it in the UK. This meant that as I revised the work and added to it, some of the source references I used in Egypt and Morocco were not available to me in the UK. As a result, more than one edition of the same book have sometimes been cited. I apologise for any frustration this may cause.

Finally, it would be incomplete and disingenuous for me to pretend that this work was a result of my sole endeavour. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to those who helped me with the research for this book. First and foremost, to my mother and father, for their encouragement and continuous support, and to my son Sami and daughter Omaymah for their patience and understanding of my not spending more time with them. To all my teachers, all my friends and librarians, too numerous to mention by name, for their invaluable help, assistance and patience. To the ordinary members of the public for sharing their cultural funeral practices. To the scholars for their consultation, discussion and feedback. And to those who allowed me to use their personal libraries. Special thanks to Dr. Abu Nasr Mohammed Abdul Matin and Shaykh Nadmi Al Shatwi for their help in ḥadīth research, and to Sr. Asseel Alalusi for her help with the Arabic typing. My heart felt thanks to Dr. Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera for his editorial work, advice and feedback. This publication would not be possible without his help, for which I am eternally indebted to him. And a very special

thanks to the anonymous blind reviewer(s) for their comments and annotations. But my greatest thanks are to my Lord, Whom I love so much and can never thank adequately. Any shortcomings or errors are mine, and I seek forgiveness and correction.

DR. SHAHRUL HUSSAIN

THE JOURNEY OF DEATH

Death raises many questions and provokes many thoughts regarding a vast range of issues, from trivial matters concerning the memories of family and friends to the more convoluted theological questions such as crossing the boundary between the worlds. What happens to the soul and where does it go? What is life in the Hereafter like? What is the reality of this transition, along with the psychological fear of the pain of death, and the thought of leaving the consciousness of this life for a perpetual state of true realisation of God's existence and power. These perplexing thoughts are further compounded by feelings that cannot be described in words, nor imagined in the mind, but can be understood only through divine revelation and guidance.

It is not only mankind that is on a journey, but all of Allāh's creation. The journey of this world is short. For some, it is an experience of just a few minutes, while for others it lasts for many decades. Whatever the duration of this journey, one thing is for certain: it will come to an end. Death is an inevitable and inescapable reality that draws closer with every second. Death is something of which we can be certain. Allāh says in the Qur'ān, "You humans, toiling laboriously towards your Lord, will meet Him" (Q 84:6). He says, "Every soul will taste death" (Q 21:35). Death is a natural phenomenon of life and every living creature must experience it. There is no escape from it and no human, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, denies it.

The thought of the end of life on earth drawing closer, and the departure from one's loved ones never to see them again on earth, is most certainly an emotional affair, not only for the dying but for the living too. It is the cycle that Allāh has chosen for His creation. Perhaps it is ironic, but it is death that gives meaning to life.

To understand death it is important to understand the purpose of creation and our existence on earth. Allāh through His infinite mercy and wisdom has created mankind as His vicegerent on earth. He has charged humans with the proper worship of Him. The concept of worship in Islam is intertwined with the concept of divine testing or *ibtīlā'*. It is through these tests that a person proves his submission to the will of Allāh, and the extent a person is obedient to Him becomes manifest. Testing is not only particular to ordinary humans; great prophets were also subjected to Allāh's tests. The Prophet Ibrāhīm ؑ is a good example to illustrate this point. Allāh tested Ibrāhīm ؑ with many trials and ordeals. These tests started from a very young age. By the conviction of his faith and to prove a point Ibrāhīm ؑ hacked to pieces the idols worshipped by his community. His community regarded this provocative action as sacrilegious, and thus demanded a severe punishment be imposed upon him. The punishment had to be exceptionally gruesome to serve as an example for anyone who would dare to insult their gods. Ibrāhīm's community decided to burn him to death. For a very young man, the thought of being burnt alive naturally creates fear and incalculable trepidation, but this did not create any regret or remorse for Ibrāhīm. When he was cast into the fire, he responded with patience knowing with full conviction that Allāh is his Creator and that he must return to Him. Allāh saved Ibrāhīm from the blazing fire by commanding it to be cool and peaceful for him. Later on in his life Ibrāhīm was ordered to take his wife and infant son and leave them in the middle of the desert. When his son grew to adolescence Allāh ordered him to slaughter his son as a symbol of sacrifice and devotion to Him. The Prophet Ibrāhīm acquitted himself faultlessly in the face of these tests. Allāh says in the Qur'ān, "And when Abraham's Lord tested him with certain commandments, which he fulfilled, He said, 'I will make you a leader of people'" (Q 2:124). Allāh tests people to see who has really shown obedience to Him. Allāh tells us of His benevolent design in testing His creatures. He says, "Every soul is certain to taste death: We test you all through the bad and the good, and to Us you will all return"

(Q 21:35). In another verse, Allāh elucidates the reason for creating death, "Exalted is He who holds all control in His hands; Who has power over all things, Who created death and life to test you and reveal which of you does best" (Q 67:1-2). It is true to say that being tested is the natural way of life and it is a blessing in disguise for those who pass. Allāh never tests His creatures with anything more than what they can bear. The concept of testing gives meaning to life. Without it life becomes meaningless as there is no logic in living a righteous life, if our actions are inconsequential or without accountability to our Creator. That is to say, trials will identify a person who is sincere and loves Allāh and worships Him regardless of how good or dreadful his current life may be. Death puts our finite existence on this planet into perspective. Since life on earth is temporary and will come to an end without doubt, the wisest surely is he who prepares for death. It is related that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said, "The intelligent one is he who has subdued his lower self and who has worked for what comes after death, and the stupid one is he who has put his lower self in pursuance of its desire and who has vain hopes about Allāh." (*Tirmidhī*, 2459)¹

It is man's natural disposition to dislike the prospect of death. This natural disposition created from fear causes people to refrain from thinking about death and seeking to understand it. However, this should not be the attitude of a true Muslim. Learning about death and understanding it is important and pivotal in developing God-consciousness. In fact, classical scholars have defined thinking about death as a commendable act.² The thought that today could be one's last day on earth will help a person to live his life according to guidance from Allāh Most High. Muslims are taught to live their lives on earth as wayfarers, never setting up permanent camp and getting deluded into thinking that the world is the final

¹ Tirmidhī, Abū 'Īsā Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā ibn Sawra, 1999. *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī* (in the *Mawsū'at al-Hadīth al-Sharīf*), Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh (henceforth cited as *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*), 2459.

² Zuḥaylī, Wahba, 1997. *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adillatubū*, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr (henceforth cited as *Zuḥaylī, Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*), 2:1472.

domicile. Once the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ took hold of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar and exhorted him, “Live in this world as though you are a stranger or a traveller. (*Bukhārī*, 6416)¹ Furthermore, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ extolled Muslims to remember death, he said, “Increase the remembrance of the terminator of enjoyment—death!” (*Ibn Hibbān*).²

Death does not mark the end of our existence; rather, it is merely a transition from one world to another. Our journey to death starts from the time of our existence as embryos in the wombs of our mothers. It is only after 120 days in the miraculous embryonic developmental stage that the soul is breathed into the fetus, and a human being begins his journey to death. ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ transmits that the Prophet ﷺ said,

A human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allāh sends an angel and breathes life into him (*Bukhārī*, 3208).

Birth may be regarded as the second phase of the journey to death. Life on earth is the place where humankind prepares for the hereafter. Only actions and deeds at this stage have any bearing on the hereafter. It is on earth that humankind grows up and acquires the means to eternal bliss and happiness or perpetual damnation and misery. Human beings are responsible for their actions and the choices they make. Allāh says in the Qur’ān, “By the soul and how He formed it, and inspired it [to know] its own rebellion and piety. The one who purifies his soul succeeds and the one who corrupts it fails” (Q 91:7–10).

¹ Bukhārī, Abū ‘Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl, 1999. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (in the *Maṣū‘at al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf*), Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, edited by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh (henceforth cited as *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*), 6416; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 2333.

² Ibn Hibbān, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī, 1997. *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān bi Tartīb Ibn Hibbān*, Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risāla, edited by Shu‘ayb al-Arna‘ūt, Third Edition (henceforth cited as *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*), 2945; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 2307.

Our death will depend on our actions. For the righteous, the experience of death will not be tormenting, but for those who live their lives transgressing the boundaries set by Allāh and His Messenger, their reckoning will be unpleasant. Allāh proclaims in the Qur’ān, “By the forceful chargers raring to go, by those (angels) who extract (the soul) with violence, and those who remove (the soul) with ease” (Q 79:1–2). Death for the righteous believer is an experience equivalent to the prick of a thorn while for the wicked the pain is likened to iron skewers being pulled out of a wet ball of wool. The soul leaves the body with the force used to extract the iron skewer from a ball of wet wool.¹

Wishing for Death

At times the challenges of life can overwhelm people. The burden of life drives them to wish for death. Wishing for death was denounced by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. He admonished his followers, “None of you shall wish for death; whether a righteous man, who perchance, may add to his good deeds; or a sinner, who perchance, may repent.” (*Ibn Hibbān*)²

Jābir relates that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Do not hope for death. . . it is fortunate that the age of a servant is prolonged and Almighty Allāh gives him provision to turn to obedience” (*Aḥmad*).³

Despairing is without doubt a grave sin,⁴ but if life is truly unbearable for any reason, such as ailment from chronic or incurable diseases, then the Prophet ﷺ taught us to make a prayer. It is narrated by Anas ibn Mālīk that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

¹ Qurṭubī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr, 2008. *Al-Tadhkira fī Aḥwāl al-Mawtā wa Umūr al-Ākhira*, Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, edited by Yūsuf ‘Alī Badawī (henceforth cited as Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*), pp. 117–118.

² Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, pp. 18–22; *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Hibbān*, 3000.

³ Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad, 2005. *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, edited by Aḥmad Shākir (henceforth cited as *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*), 14500, 11:484.

⁴ Keller, Nuh Ha Mim, 1994. *Reliance of the Traveller*, Evanston: Sunna Books (henceforth cited as Keller, *Reliance*), p. 695.

"None of you should wish for death on account of an injury that has afflicted him. If there is no alternative, let him pray: 'O Allāh! Give me life so long as that life will be good for me, and take away my life if death is good for me' (*Allāhumma aḥyīnī mā kānat al-ḥayātu khayral-lī wa tawaffanī idhā kānat al-wafātu khayral-lī*) (*Bukhārī*, 5671).¹

The admonition against wishing for death was repeatedly conveyed to us by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. It should therefore, be avoided unless the supplication is made for the reasons highlighted above and in the manner shown by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.

The Journey after Death

After death the soul takes the next step of its journey to meeting the Creator. The prophetic traditions encapsulate this journey. It is related:

When the believer is about to depart from this world and go forward into the next world, angels with faces as bright as the sun descend from the heavens and sit around him in multitudes stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says, "Good soul, come out to forgiveness and pleasure from Allāh!" Then his soul emerges like a drop of water flows from a water-skin and the angel takes hold of it. When he has grasped it, the other angels do not leave it in his hand even for the twinkling of an eye. They take it and place it in a perfumed shroud and fragrance issues from it like the sweetest scent of musk found on the face of the earth. Then they bear it upwards and whenever they pass by a company of angels, they ask, "Who is this good soul?" The angels with the soul reply, "So-and-so, the son of so-and-so," using the best names by which people used to call him in this world. They bring him to the

¹ Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, p. 22; Nishāpūrī, Abū 'l-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj ibn Muslim, 1999. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (in the *Maṣṣū'at al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf*), Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh, (henceforth cited as *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*), 6814; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5671.

lowest heaven and ask for the gate to be opened. It is opened for him and angels who are near Allāh from each of the heavens accompany him to the subsequent heaven until he arrives at that heaven where Allāh is. Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, says, "Register the book of My slave in the *Illīyyūn* (the record of the exalted ones) and take him back to the earth, from which I created them and to which I return them and from which I will bring them forth again."

His soul is then returned to his body and two angels come to him. They make him sit up and say to him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "My Lord is Allāh." They ask him, "What is your religion?" He replies, "My religion is Islam." They ask him, "Who is this man who was sent among you?" He replies, "The Messenger of Allāh." They ask him, "How did you come to know these things?" He replies, "I read the Book of Allāh, believed it, and declared it to be true." Then a voice from on high declares, "My slave has spoken the truth, so spread out carpets from the Garden for him and open a gate of the Garden for him!" Some of its fragrance then comes to him, his grave is expanded as far as the eye can see, and a man with beautiful garments and a fragrant scent comes to him and says, "Rejoice in what delights you, for this is the day which you were promised." He asks, "Who are you? Yours is a face which betokens good." He replies, "I am your good deeds." Then he says, "O Lord, let the last hour come soon so that I may rejoin my family and my property!"

When an unbeliever is about to depart from this world and go forward into the next world, angels with black faces descend from the heavens carrying rough haircloth and sit around him in throngs stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says, "Foul soul, come out to the wrath and anger of Allāh!" Then his soul disintegrates within his body and it is dragged out like iron skewers are pulled out of a wet ball of wool. Then the angel takes hold of it. When he has grasped it, the other angels do not leave it in his hand even for the blink of an eye. They take it and wrap it in the rough haircloth and a stench comes out of it like the worst stench of a corpse on the face of the earth. Then they take it up and whenever they pass by a company of angels, they ask,

"Who is this foul soul?" The angels with the soul reply, "So-and-so, the son of so-and-so," using the worst names by which people used to call him in this world. They bring him to the lowest heaven and ask for the gate to be opened for him. It is not opened. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ then recited, "The gates of heaven will not be opened to them nor will they enter the Garden until the camel passes through the eye of the needle" [Q 7:40]. Then Allāh the Mighty and Majestic, will say, "Register his book in the *Sijjīn* (the record of the lowly on the lowest earth)." Then his soul is flung down. The Prophet ﷺ then recited, "Whoever associates anything with Allāh, it is as though he has fallen from heaven and the birds snatch him away or the wind sweeps him headlong into a place far away." (Q 22:31)

Then his soul is returned to his body and two angels come and say to him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "Alas, alas, I do not know!" They ask him, "What is your religion?" He replies, "Alas, alas, I do not know!" They ask him, "Who is this man who was sent to you?" He replies, "Alas, alas, I do not know!" Then a voice calls from on high, "My slave has lied, so spread out carpets from the Fire for him and open a gate of the Fire for him!" Then a hot blast from it reaches him, his grave is made so narrow for him that his ribs are pressed together, and a man with a hideous face and clothing and a foul odour comes to him and says, "Grieve on account of what has brought you disgrace, for this is the day that you were promised." He asks, "Who are you? Yours is a face which betokens evil." He replies, "I am your bad deeds." Then he says, "O Lord, do not let the Last Hour come!"

The Torment of the Grave

Life in the *barzakh*, the interim realm between the earth and the Hereafter, also presents itself with trials and tribulations. For the righteous, this experience is indeed a joyous and pleasant wait for the Day of Judgement. For the wicked however, *barzakh* will be an agonising wait. Prophetic traditions describe vividly the torment

¹ *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, 18521, 14:225-27.

that awaits the wicked and the bountiful joy that awaits the sincere believer. It is recorded that the Prophet ﷺ said:

When a person is placed in his grave and his companions depart from him, he hears the treading of their shoes. Two angels come and make him sit up and ask him: "What did you used to say about this man Muḥammad?" A believer, will answer, "I bear witness that he is the servant and Messenger of Allāh." It will be said to him: "Look at your place in Hell which Allāh exchanged for a place for you in Paradise," and he will look at both of them together. As for a hypocrite and infidel, he will be questioned: "What did you used to say about this man Muḥammad?" He will reply, "I do not know, I used to say what people used to say." It will be said to him: "You have neither known, nor have you read." He will then be beaten with an iron rod, and he will scream so loudly it will be heard by everyone except man and jinn (*Bukhārī*, 1374, *Muslim*, 2870).

Zayd ibn Thābit narrates that

the Prophet was passing by the garden of Banū 'l-Najjār riding a donkey. The donkey became frightened and jerked suddenly, almost causing the Prophet ﷺ to fall. There were five to six graves. The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Who knows the inmates of these graves?" A man replied that he knew them. The Prophet ﷺ asked him, "In what condition did they die?" The man replied, "In a state of disbelief." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily these people are suffering the torment of the grave. If it were not for the fact that you would abandon burying the dead, I would pray to Allāh that you should listen to the punishment of the grave that I can hear." He then turned his face to us and said: "Seek refuge in Allāh from the punishment of the Fire." We said: "We seek refuge in Allāh from the punishment of the Fire." He said: "Seek refuge in Allāh from the punishment of the grave." We said: "We seek refuge in Allāh from the punishment of the grave." He said: "Seek refuge in Allāh from calamity; that which is hidden and that which is apparent." We said: "We Seek refuge in Allāh from calamity; that which is hidden and that which is apparent." He said: "Seek refuge

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in Allāh from the trials of the anti-Christ (*dajjāl*).¹ We said: "We seek refuge in Allāh from the trials of the anti-Christ" (*Muslim*, 7213).

Barā' ibn 'Āzib ؓ narrates that the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said:

Two angels will come to the dead in his grave and sit him up. They will ask him, "Who is your Lord?" A sincere believer will reply, "My Lord is Allāh." The angels will ask, "What is your religion?" The person will reply, "My religion is Islam." The angels will ask, "Who is this man sent among you?" The person will reply, "He was the Prophet of Allāh." The angels will ask, "What has informed you of it?" The person will say, "I have read the Book of Allāh and believed in it." A crier from the heavens will proclaim, "Indeed My servant has spoken the truth. Set up for him a place in Paradise and open for him a door into it." It will be opened for him and its air and fragrance will come and it will extend therein as far as his eyes can see. As for the unbeliever, he will remember his death and his soul will be returned to his body. Two angels will come to him. They will make him sit up and ask him, "Who is your Lord?" The unbeliever will reply, "Alas! alas! I do not know." The angels will ask, "What is your religion?" The person will reply, "Alas! alas! I do not know." The angels will ask, "Who is this man sent among you?" The person will reply, "Alas! alas! I do not know." A crier from the heavens will proclaim, "He has spoken falsehood. So set up for him a bed of fire, and dress him in a dress of fire and open for him a door into the Fire." Then its heat and hot wind will envelop him. His grave will close in on him until the ribs on his right side penetrate those on the left side. Then two blind and deaf angels will be sent to him with an iron hammer. If a mountain were struck with that hammer the mountain would turn to dust. They will beat him with that hammer such that his screams will be heard by everything from the east and west except for man and jinn. He will be turned into dust and again the soul will be returned to him.¹

These powerful ḥadīths depict a clear picture of the scenario of the grave. These ḥadīths are clear and need no explanation of the ill

¹ *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, 18521, 14:225-27.

consequences awaiting those who live a godless life, and at the same time vividly describe the pleasures and bounties for those who live a God-conscious life.

How to Save Yourself from the Punishment of the Grave

There can be no doubt that Allāh is a just and loving God who loves to forgive and show mercy to His creation. Through Allāh's infinite mercy and love He has reserved punishment for the wicked, who show nothing but disobedience and transgression to Allāh. These wicked people did not take time to repent to Allāh and display remorse and regret for their actions. Their preoccupation with this life caused them to be deluded and distracted from the reality of death. Allāh has not only told us of the painful torment He has reserved for the wicked, but He has also promised the faithful and sincere believers salvation. There is a very interesting ḥadīth recorded by Ṭabarānī in *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* and Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* and Aṣḥānī in the *Targhīb*, on the authority of 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Samura, that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ had a dream which he related to his Companions:

He saw one of his followers whose soul the Angel of Death came to take. However, his righteous behaviour toward his parents came and drove the Angel of Death away from him. He saw another person surrounded by the torment of the grave, but his ablutions came and saved him from it. He saw another person surrounded by devils. Then his remembrance of Allāh came and made the devils flee from him. Then he saw another person surrounded by the angels of punishment. His prayer came and rescued him. He saw another person whose tongue was lolling out from thirst and whenever he approached a pool of water, he was stopped and driven away. His fasting of Ramaḍān came and gave him water to drink. He saw another man and the prophets sitting in circles. Every time the person approached one of the circles, he was stopped and driven away. His bathing for *janāba*

(to rid seminal defilement) came, took hold of his hand, and sat him down in a circle. Another person had darkness in front of him, behind him, on his right, on his left and above him. He was completely lost in it. His *hajj* and *umra* came and led him out of the darkness into the light. Another person was being pursued by flames and sparks of fire. His charity formed a veil between him and the fire and shaded his head. Another person was speaking to a group of believers who would not speak to him. His upholding of kinship came and told the group of believers that he had maintained ties of kinship and ordered them to speak to him. Then the believers spoke to him and shook hands with him. Another person was surrounded by the *Zabāniya* (Hell's wardens). His commanding the right and forbidding the wrong came and rescued him from them and put him among the angels of mercy. Another person was kneeling with a veil between him and Allāh. His good character came and took his hand, and Allāh let him enter His presence. Another person had received his book of deeds in his left hand. His fear of Allāh came and took his book and placed it in his right hand. The scales of another person were light in the balance. Those of his children who had died young came and made the scales level. Another person was standing on the brink of Hell. His hope in Allāh came and rescued him from it, and he withdrew from it. Another person had fallen into the fire. The tears that he had wept out of fear of Allāh came and rescued him from it. Another person was standing on the causeway over Hellfire trembling like a leaf in a strong wind. His good opinion of Allāh came and allayed his terror, and he was able to move on. Another person was crawling along the causeway, sometimes creeping, and sometimes just clinging on. His prayer came and rescued him. Another person reached the gates of Paradise but was locked out. His testimony that "there is no god but Allāh" came and opened the gates for him and let him into the Garden.¹

For a true believer his righteous deeds will help him and come to his

¹ Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn, nd. *Adhāb al-Qabr wa mā Yunjī minh*, Alexandria: Dār Ibn Khaldūn, pp. 36–37.

rescue. When the time for death comes, it is a gift¹ and compensation for a true believer.²

I would like to end this discussion about death by quoting from Steve Jobs, the former CEO of the giant computer corporation Apple, who died on 5th October 2011. I remember the day he died, not only because the media was in a frenzy of broadcasting dedications and paying tribute to this great inventor, but more so because I was writing this chapter about death. I was driving and listening to the radio playing the speech that he delivered at Stanford University in the USA as a tribute to him. His speech surprised me so much that I pulled the car over to listen to him. The following is an excerpt from this speech. Readers should note that Steve Jobs was not a Muslim and hence his words are not likely to be based on Islamic teachings. Therefore, some aspects of his speech might not be concordant with the teachings of Islam. Nevertheless, what he said is very interesting.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

¹ *Al-Hadis*. English translation of *Mishkāt al-Masābiḥ*, Maulana Fazlul Karim, New Delhi: Islamic Book Services (1989), 428, 3:14.

² Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, p. 57.

About a year ago, I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning and it clearly showed a tumour on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was a type of cancer that was almost incurable and that I should expect to live no longer than 3-6 months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for: "prepare to die." It means to try and tell your kids everything you thought you had the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure that everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day, later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumour. I was sedated, but my wife was there and she told me that when they looked at my cells under the microscope the doctor started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and thankfully, I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept. No-one wants to die, even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there, and yet death is the destination that we all share. No-one has ever escaped it. And that is how it should be because death is the single best invention of life. It is life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new.

Right now, the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it's quite true. Your time is limited so don't waste your time living someone else's life.

Reprehensible Innovation (*Bid'a*)

The passing of loved ones is always an emotional occasion. Heightened emotions combined with the stupor of grief usually create a fertile ground for the growth and practice of reprehensible innovations. Islam has not made any provisions for the acceptance of reprehensible innovations, nor has it made emotions a justification, dispensation or license for the allowance of *bid'a*. It is recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ passed by a woman who was weeping beside a grave. He told her to fear Allāh and be patient. She said to him (not recognising that it was the Prophet), "Go away, for you have not been afflicted with a calamity like mine." She was later informed that it was the Prophet, so she went to his house and said to him, "I did not recognize you." The Prophet said to her, "Indeed, patience is at the first stroke of a calamity" (*Bukhārī*, 1283). It is vitally important that one does not allow emotions to rule over one and dictate the actions that should be offered in respect to honouring the dead. Actions, regardless of how virtuous they appear, can be sinful if not concordant with the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunna. The message of Islam is crystal clear regarding the illegitimacy of *bid'a* regardless of the occasion or situation. 'Irbād ibn Sāriya narrates that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said, "Beware of invented matters. Indeed all invented matters are *bid'a* and all *bid'a* is misguidance" (*Tirmidhī*, 2676).

Reprehensible innovations can in no way benefit the dead. Rather, those living and committing *bid'a* acts have transgressed the law of Allāh and His Messenger, and are consequently sinful. In recent times, much has been made of the topic of *bid'a*. Excessive attitudes regarding *bid'a* have created two extremes in Muslim societies. At one end of the spectrum we find some Muslims who have adopted an inflexible and excessively strict attitude towards *bid'a*, whereby they consider any actions not spelt out clearly in the Qur'ān and Sunna as *bid'a*. This has led them to regard many members of the Muslim communities as innovators. At the other end of the spectrum we find the other extreme, where certain Muslims have adopted a very

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liberal approach to *bid'a*, dealing with it with great latitude. This has resulted in the acceptance of almost all actions as compatible and concordant with the Sunna, regardless of how absurd they may be.

It is of paramount importance that *bid'a* is avoided at all costs and at all times, especially because grief fuelled by delicate emotions creates a perfect environment for *bid'a*. This chapter will confine itself to a brief discussion on this aspect of *bid'a*. It must be remarked that it is not my intention to write a thorough disquisition regarding *bid'a*. Over many centuries the arguments and views of scholars pertaining to the concept of *bid'a* have developed and resulted in many books dedicated to the topic. This book is not a research on *bid'a*. However, it will embark on trying to summarise the concept of *bid'a* with a view to clarifying a balanced middle path.

The Meaning of Bid'a

Shāṭibī writes that *bid'a* comes from the root, *b-d-'*, which literally means to invent something unique.¹ Rāghib al-Aṣḥānī explains that the literal meaning of *bid'a* is "to create without imitation or copying."² With respect to the technical meaning of *bid'a*, Muslim scholars have differed regarding its precise definitions. In his book *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa 'l-Lughāt*, Nawawī explains *bid'a* thus, "To invent something that was not done during the time of the Prophet ﷺ."³ Maḥfūz, after discussing *bid'a* according to Shāṭibī defines it as "an invented path in religion, to be followed with the hope of attaining closeness to Allāh."⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī in his *Fath al-Bārī* defines *bid'a* as any invented action which has no legal (*sharʿī*) proof to substantiate it.⁵ Similarly, Aynī in his commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* defines *bid'a* as inventing something that has

no basis during the life of the Prophet ﷺ.¹ It is apparent from this that Muslim scholars define it as the introduction of an action that contradicts the principles of Islamic teachings into Islam as a religious act of worship.

Types of Bid'a

There are two schools of thought regarding the division of *bid'a*. One school maintains that *bid'a* cannot be divided into any types. *Bid'a* is only of one type; it is simply unlawful. Therefore, any *bid'a* performed is unlawful and constitutes misguidance. This opinion is maintained by Shāṭibī and is favoured by the Wahhābī movement. However, a majority of the classical scholars maintain that *bid'a* can be divided into sub-categories. Many of these scholars broadly divide *bid'a* into two categories. Either it is a good *bid'a* or bad *bid'a*. Nawawī writes, "To invent something that was not done during the time of the Prophet ﷺ is of two types: either it is a praiseworthy *bid'a* or reprehensible."² Abū Naʿīm relates from Ibrāhīm ibn al-Junayd that he heard Shāfiʿī saying that *bid'a* is of two types: praiseworthy *bid'a* and reprehensible *bid'a*.³ In like manner, Bayhaqī relates that Shāfiʿī said,

Innovated actions are two types: invented actions that contradict the Qurʾān, Sunna or consensus. This type of *bid'a* is reprehensible and misguiding. As for the invented actions that are good, there is no difference of opinion that it is a good *bid'a*. Indeed ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb established the Ramaḍān night prayer (*Tarāwīḥ*) in congregation and said, "Blessed is this *bid'a*."⁴

There are other scholars who have gone further and elaborated the types of *bid'a* by dividing it into multiple categories. ʿIzz ibn ʿAbd al-Salām writes that *bid'a* is constituted of five types: *wājib* (or obligatory), unlawful (*ḥarām*), laudable (*mandūb*), disliked

¹ Maḥfūz, ʿAlī, 2007. *Al-Ibdāʿ fī Maḍār al-Ibtidāʿ*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Ṣafā (henceforth cited as Maḥfūz, *Al-Ibdāʿ*), p. 30.

² Aṣḥānī, Rāghib, 1997. *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʾān*, Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, edited by Ṣafwān ʿAdnān Dāwūdī (henceforth cited as *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʾān*), p. 110.

³ Ghumārī, ʿAbdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣiddiq, 2006. *Itqān al-Ṣunʿa fī Taḥqīq Maʿnā al-Bidʿa*, Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, (henceforth cited as Ghumārī, *Itqān*), p. 14.

⁴ Maḥfūz, *Al-Ibdāʿ*, p. 32.

⁵ Ghumārī, *Itqān*, p. 14.

¹ Maḥfūz, *Al-Ibdāʿ*, p. 35.

² Ghumārī, *Itqān*, p. 14.

³ Ibid., p. 13.

⁴ Ibid.

(*makrūh*), and permitted (*mubāḥ*). He argues that the formula for understanding this is that *bid'a* is assessed on the system of legal-value classifications (*ḥukm shar'i*). If the *bid'a* in question falls under the category of necessary, then it is *wājib*; if it is unlawful, then it is *ḥarām*; if it is laudable, then it is *mandūb*, and so on. Ibn 'Abd al-Salām maintains that an example of the *wājib bid'a* is to study and master Arabic grammar. Justifying this he argues that Arabic grammar is a means of understanding the Qur'ān. Since Muslims are obliged to understand the Qur'ān, it follows that acquiring the tools to do this also becomes obligatory. Other examples of this are to memorise lone narrator ḥadīths, write books, the classification of ḥadīth, and the like. Unlawful *bid'a* are invented matters introduced as tenets of belief. An example of laudable *bid'a* is the building of schools or any institutions of good that did not exist during the time of the Prophet, holding scholarly debates, and the like. Disliked *bid'a* is to decorate mosques, embellish Qur'āns and the like. The examples of permitted *bid'a* are many, such as exchanging greetings after prayer, having a variety of food and drink during meals and banquets, and the like.¹

The advocates of the division of *bid'a* claim that there are many proofs to support dividing *bid'a* into many types. For instance, it is recorded by Muslim, Nasā'i and others that Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said, "Whosoever establishes a good practice in Islam, he will have the reward for it and the reward for those who follow it, without their reward being decreased in the slightest. And whosoever establishes a bad act in Islam, he will have the sin for it and the sin for those who follow it, without any decrease in the sin they incurred" (*Muslim*, 69, *Nasā'i*, 2554). This ḥadīth is a good proof to argue the division of *bid'a*. This prophetic tradition indicates a certain degree of flexibility and creativity in doing good actions. However, the act must not contradict the fundamental principles of Islam and the laws governing the worship of Allāh. For example, it would be unlawful for anyone to add extra bows or prostrations to the prayer in the

¹ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

mistaken belief that this will amount to an increase in good actions. This is because the institution of the prayer is well established and has been clearly explained in terms of its procedures and the rules that pertain to it. Any suggestion of alteration to these procedures is rejected and considered as *bid'a*.

The protagonists of the simple type of *bid'a* base their argument largely on the grounds of sticking to the literal meaning of the ḥadīth. They argue that the use of the syntactic determiner "*kuḥ*" denotes "everything" and does not allow for exceptions or concessions to any so-called good *bid'a*. However, Shāṭibī, one of the greatest advocates of one type of *bid'a*, does accept *bid'a* on account of *maṣlaḥa*, or public benefit. However, Shāṭibī's inconsistency has drawn criticism from Ghumārī, who accuses him of merely playing with words.¹

The problem with *bid'a* is that its definition is far from clear-cut and tight. Defining *bid'a* is no easy task. The reason for this may lie in the fact that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ did not mention clearly the conditions and criteria for *bid'a*, rather it seems that the Prophet ﷺ left a certain degree of latitude. The general wording of the aforementioned prophetic tradition resulted in a certain imprecision regarding it among the Muslims of the second generation and beyond. What further complicates the situation is the loosely worded definition of *bid'a* on the part of some scholars. In turn, these definitions have become a means for some Muslims to justify some prevalent cultural practices as Islamic. It is very difficult to give a watertight definition of *bid'a*. However, the idea that *bid'a* is only of the simple type is an extremely short-sighted view. It disregards the ample evidences and the practices of many Companions, which illustrate that they exercised a certain degree of personal judgement regarding certain aspects of worship, such as the introduction of *Tarāwīḥ* prayer in congregation, multiple *adhāns* for the Friday prayer, and for a short period, even delivering the sermon for the 'Īd prayer before the prayer. What is clear from the prophetic traditions regarding the unlawfulness of *bid'a* is the introduction

¹ Ghumārī, *Itqān*, p. 16.

of new theological ideas. There is absolutely no scope for creativity and flexibility in matters of belief in Islam. The articles of faith are mentioned clearly in the Qur'an and the ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ; therefore, a person cannot make arbitrary claims pertaining to the beliefs of the Muslims without clearly substantiated proofs.

A commonly used argument is that it is unlawful to institute an action that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ did not do. The narrow attitude of the protagonists of the "simple-type" of *bid'a* have neglected that there are countless actions the Prophet ﷺ did not do. This is because it is humanly impossible to encompass all the *mubāḥ* (permissible) actions. To argue that the Prophet's never having done something implies that doing it is impermissible has no merit. On the other hand, the fact that there are many things the Prophet did not do does not mean that they can be done or that they are acceptable. For instance, would it be permissible to recite the *basmala* before reciting the *tashahhud* in prayer? The answer would be no. This is because the Prophet Muḥammad never did this. To introduce this action into the prayer is *bid'a*. Although the axiom that the "Prophet Muḥammad not doing something does not prove its unlawfulness" has its merits, it cannot be employed consistently when trying to understand *bid'a*. This is the crux of the problem. That is to say, it is difficult to apply any single definition or criterion for *bid'a* consistently in acts of spiritual worship. Islam does not prevent creativity in supererogatory acts of spiritual worship. However, this creativity must be curtailed and restricted to sensible actions. There can be many examples of how using creativity can be a positive way of attracting and engaging people in the worship of Allāh. For example, the *imām* teaching his congregation *sūras* from the Qur'an after prayer, where he reads a particular verse and the people repeat it after him until they have memorised that portion of the Qur'an. Although this act is not found in the practice of the Prophet ﷺ or his Companions, it would be unfair to regard this as a *bid'a*. This is because the *imām* has used a creative way of engaging his community in the memorisation of parts of the Qur'an, which does not contradict the message or teachings of Islam. Rather, it

is well within the spirit of worship in Islam. In like manner, many Muslim school assemblies consist of collective worship unconnected with *ṣalāt*, such as reading passages from the Qur'an or creative elements such as making children learn about Islam. It would be unreasonable to regard this as a *bid'a*.

To sum up, there can be no doubt regarding the unlawfulness and evil of reprehensible *bid'a*. The position regarding *bid'a* as simple in type is not strong and was not supported by the vast majority of Sunnī classical scholars. However, this does not give a free licence to Muslims to do whatever they wish to do. Although there is scope for being creative in engaging people in the worship of Allāh, it does have its limits. The question is: What are those limits? It is my opinion that this must be self-regulated. A certain degree of common sense needs to be applied and any acts of worship need to be observed with respect and being mindful of its acceptability before Allāh. Furthermore, opinions expressed by classical scholars should be treated with respect, provided they are underpinned by evidence. The logic behind this stance is that it would be mistaken to imagine that classical scholars, who have been wholly accepted by the Muslim *umma* to be experts in Islam, and who are upright and well known for their piety, would intentionally promote reprehensible *bid'a*.

Another key factor in this regard is the role intention plays. The acceptability and rejection of any act of worship rests solely on having the correct intention. There is a very famous juristic maxim that encapsulates this, *Al-Umūru bi-Maqāsidihā*, that is, acts are judged by their goals and purposes. This maxim emphasises intention and purpose. Intention plays an essential and pivotal role in almost all aspects of spiritual worship. Intention is the soul of all physical, liturgical, spiritual and verbal worship. Whether the act of worship is accepted by Allāh, or otherwise, depends on the validity of the intention. The scriptural evidence to underpin this maxim is the well-known ḥadīth "Indeed all actions depend upon intention, and for every person is that which he intends" (*Bukhārī*, 1). The Qur'an also clearly tells us that the sole purpose of human existence on

earth is to worship Allāh alone without any idolatrous association with Him, "I created the jinn and mankind for nothing else but that they may worship Me" (Q 51:56), and "Worship Allāh and join not any partners with Him" (Q 4:36).

The meaning of "worshipping Allāh" inherently implies that any act of worship must be done purely to please Allāh alone, and this can only be determined by the intention. No other verse in the Qur'an speaks more clearly about the importance of sincerity in worshipping Allāh than verse five of Sūrat al-Bayyina: "Yet all that they had been commanded was that they worship Allāh, with utter sincerity, devoting themselves exclusively to Him, and that they establish prayer and pay *zakāt*. This is the right faith" (Q 98:5). Without pure and sincere intention to please Allāh, human action is meaningless, no matter how great the deed or action may be.

Therefore, two points need to be borne in mind; firstly, the act of worship must be done to please Allāh, and second, it must be free of *bid'a*.

WHEN A PERSON IS DYING

In his preliminary discussion about death Zuḥaylī captures tersely the essence of this transitional phase. He writes, "Death is the bridge between the two lives: the life of the world is temporary while the life of the hereafter is eternal. The world is the place to prepare for the hereafter. Hence, he who has done righteous deeds in this life will be saved from a dreadful reckoning and will be of those who will dwell in the Gardens of Allāh. And those who have done malevolent actions will be punished, except if Allāh forgives. Death is the departure of the soul to the hereafter. It does not imply the end of existence but simply a separation of the soul from the body."¹ Hence it is laudable for every Muslim to prepare for death, but obligatory for those who are conscious of meeting their Creator. Before death a person must rectify his thoughts about Allāh Most High. This means to nurture the thought that Allāh will show him mercy and compassion.²

For the living it is a duty to visit the dying and settle any differences they may have. Visiting the dying is a highly virtuous act. It is narrated that Abū Hurayra heard the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ saying, "There are five rights a Muslim has over another Muslim:

1. To return a greeting (i.e., reply back to the *salām*),
2. To visit the sick,
3. To follow the funeral procession,
4. To accept an invitation, and
5. To reply back to a person who has sneezed (and has said, 'All praises due to Allāh')" (*Bukhārī*, 1240).

¹ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1471-1472.

² Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, 1:60.

In a ḥadīth recorded by Tirmidhī on the authority of 'Alī the Prophet ﷺ said, "No Muslim visits another Muslim during the day except that seventy thousand angels pray for him until night fall. And no Muslim visits another Muslim during the night except that seventy thousand angels pray for him until day break" (*Tirmidhī*, 969).¹

The Etiquette and Supplications to Read When Visiting the Sick

It is important that non-related visitors do not prolong their visit with the ailing. Their visiting times should be convenient for the person they are visiting. It is laudable to wish the sick a speedy recovery and reassure them of regaining health. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When you enter upon the ailing, encourage them by way of reassurance of regaining good health. Indeed nothing will prevent the decree of Allāh from taking place, but it will cause comfort for the ailing" (*Ibn Māja*, 1438). The visitor should gently and graciously encourage the person to seek forgiveness in Allāh. It is also laudable for the visitor to pray for the sick person. Once Thābit ؓ was ill and Anas ؓ came to visit him. Anas prayed for Thābit saying,

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ النَّاسِ، مُذْهِبَ الْبَاسِ، إِشْفِ أَنْتَ الشَّافِي، شِفَاءً لَا يُغَادِرُ سَقَمًا.

Allāhumma rabba 'n-nās(i), mudhhiba 'l-ba's(a), ishfi, anta 'sh-shāfi, shifā'an lā yughādiru saqaman.

O Allāh, Lord of Mankind, Remover of Harm, cure [this illness], You are the Curer with such a cure that leaves no illness behind (*Bukhārī*, 5742).

Or:

¹ Tirmidhī, nd. *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir and Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, 969, 3:300 (authentic).

أَذْهِبِ الْبَاسَ، رَبَّ النَّاسِ، أَنْتَ الشَّافِي، شِفَاءً لَا يُغَادِرُ سَقَمًا.

Adhhibi 'l-ba's(a), rabba 'n-nās(i), ishfi, anta 'sh-shāfi, shifā'an lā yughādiru saqaman.

Remove the harm, O Allāh, Lord of Mankind, for You are the Curer, with such a cure that leaves no illness behind (*Bukhārī*, 5675).

Visiting Non-Muslims

There is scholarly difference of opinion regarding the permissibility of visiting ailing non-Muslims. Some Ḥanbalī jurists have taken a very strict view that it is not permissible to visit non-Muslims.¹ The Shāfi'ī opinion is more flexible. They maintain that although it is not laudable (or religiously virtuous) to visit ailing non-Muslims, it is permissible.² They base their view on a tradition recorded in Bukhārī that a young Jewish boy used to work as a servant to the Prophet ﷺ. He became terminally ill. The Prophet went to visit him and sat by his head. He told the boy to become a Muslim. The child looked at his father and his father told him to obey the Prophet ﷺ and the boy became a Muslim (*Bukhārī*, 1356).

It seems that the above opinions are most likely applicable to non-Muslims who are not related to the visitor. If the dying person is a family member then there is no reason why a Muslim cannot visit them. It is a fact that the Prophet ﷺ visited his paternal uncle Abū Ṭālib while he was dying. Moreover, there are no prohibitions in the Qur'ān or ḥadīth preventing Muslims from visiting their non-Muslim kith and kin. Rather, it is a part of keeping good relations with family, which is encouraged in the Qur'ān and Sunna.

¹ Bahūtī, Maṣṣūr ibn Yūnus ibn Idrīs, 1999. *Khashshāf al-Qinā' 'an Matn al-Iqnā' li l-Hajāwī*, Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, edited by Muḥammad 'Adnān Yāsīn Darwīsh (henceforth cited as *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*), 2:88.

² Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Muḥy al-Dīn ibn Sharaf, 2000. *Al-Majmū' Sharḥ al-Mubaddhab*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, edited by Maḥmūd al-Maṭrahī (henceforth cited as Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*), 5:99.

A difference of religion should not prevent a person from visiting a dying non-Muslim relative. Furthermore, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ visiting the young Jewish boy is a clear proof for the permissibility of visiting non-Muslims who are dying, regardless if they are related to them or not.

What to do When the Signs of Death become Apparent

When the signs of death manifest on a person it is laudable (but not necessary) to lay the person on his right side with the limbs straightened and facing the *qibla*.¹ The Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ instructed regarding the Ka'ba, "It is your *qibla* alive or dead" (*Abū Dāwūd*, 2875). It is important that those who are present try to provide as much comfort as they can to the dying. There are a few religious rites that can be performed.

1. Talqīn

Talqīn means to encourage the dying to recite the Islamic formula of faith. When the signs of death are manifest, the people around the dying person should gently encourage him or her to recite the formula "*Lā ilāha illa 'Llāhu Muḥammadu 'r-Rasūlullāh*" (There is no god but Allāh, and Muḥammad is His Messenger).

It is related that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said, "Instruct the dying to say *Lā ilāha illa 'Llāh* (There is no god but Allāh) because it will eliminate previous sins" (*Muslim*, 2123).² The *talqīn* should be done gently, without annoying or forcing the dying during the very

¹ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1479.

² Muslims and others, see Ṣan'ānī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Amīr al-Yamānī, nd. *Subul al-Salām Sharḥ Bulūgh al-Marām min Jam' Adillat al-Aḥkām*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Imān, edited by Muḥammad 'Iṣām al-Dīn Amīn (henceforth cited as Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*), 2:156-157; Shawkānī, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad, 1999. *Nayl al-Awṣār min Aḥādith Sayyid al-Akhyār Sharḥ Muntaqā 'l-Akḥbār*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, edited by Muḥammad Sālim Hāshim (henceforth cited as Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṣār*), 3:379.

last phase of his life. Once the person recites the formula it is better to leave him rather than constantly requesting him to repeat it.¹

2. Reciting Qur'ān

There is a difference of opinion whether or not reciting certain *sūras* from the Qur'ān is permissible during the time a person is dying.² The vast majority of scholars maintain that reciting *Sūra Yāsīn*³ to the dying is permissible.⁴ This is also maintained by the later Mālikī scholars.⁵ They base their opinion on the prophetic tradition related on the authority of Ma'qīl ibn Yasār, "Yāsīn is the heart of the Qur'ān. Nothing will happen to a person who reads it desiring Allāh and the Abode of the Hereafter except that Allāh will forgive him. So recite Yāsīn over the dying" (*Abū Dāwūd*, 3121). However, the early Mālikī jurists considered reciting Yāsīn close to the time of death and after it to be disliked.⁶ They argued that there are serious questions regarding the authenticity of the aforementioned ḥadīth. Ḥadīth masters such as Ibn al-Qaṭṭān and Dāraquṭnī have judged the ḥadīth to be weak. However, it is worth mentioning that other masters like Ibn Ḥibbān have classified the ḥadīth as authentic.⁷ Since, the view of not reciting Qur'ān to the dying is only a minority opinion, it is better to recite the Qur'ān in accordance with the view of the majority. Moreover, the early Mālikīs did not regard it as unlawful but simply considered it to be disliked.

¹ Ibid.; Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1479; Keller, *Reliance*, p. 223.

² The reason for the difference of opinion is related to the concept of *iṣāl al-thawāb*. This will be discussed in detail further on.

³ See appendix.

⁴ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1480.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṣār*, 3:382; Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*, 2:158.

The Immediate Tasks After Death

When the inevitable appointed time has arrived and the soul has left the body, the people present, and in particular the heir, should speak well of the deceased. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Speak well of the dead, because the angels pronounce *"Āmin"* (O Allāh, accept) upon what the family of the deceased say" (Aḥmad, 4:125).¹

Then one should:

1. Close the eyes of the deceased and pronounce, "*Bismi 'Llāhi wa 'alā millati Rasūli 'Llāh*" (In the Name of Allāh and upon the religion of the Messenger of Allāh);²
2. Close the jaws. Use a bandage if necessary to hold the jaws closed;³
3. Straighten the limbs if possible, if not, then they should be left alone;
4. Remove any jewellery; and
5. If there is any fear of the stomach bloating, then place something heavy on the abdomen.

Supplications to Make After Death

The members of the deceased's family may say the following:

For a male:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلَهُ وَعَاقِبْنِي مِنْهُ عَقَبًا حَسَنًا.

For a female:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلَهَا وَعَاقِبْنِي مِنْهَا عَقَبًا حَسَنًا.

¹ *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, 4:125; Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 3:381.

² Nīshāpūrī, Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh al-Ḥākim (1990), *Al-Mustadrak 'ala 'l-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, edited by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Atā' (henceforth cited as Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak*), 1353, 1:520.

³ Keller, *Reliance*, p. 223; Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1480.

Allāhumma 'ghfir lī wa lahū/wa lahā wa 'āqibnī minhu/minhā 'uqban ḥasanan.

O Allāh, forgive me and him/her and grant me a good reward after him/her (*Muslim*, 2129).

Also,

اللَّهُمَّ أَجْزِنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي وَاعْقِبْنِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا

Allāhumma 'jurnī fi muṣibatī wa 'qubnī khayram minhā.

O Allāh, reward me in my affliction and honour me with something better than this (*Muslim*, 2126).

Those who receive news of someone dying should say,

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ، وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ.

Innā li-'Llāhī wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn.

Indeed to Allāh we belong and to Him we shall return.¹

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter 42.

THE IMMEDIATE RIGHTS OF THE DECEASED

After death the deceased has the right to be honoured and buried with respect and courtesy. There are four elements to preparing for the burial. They are:

1. Washing the deceased,
2. Shrouding the deceased,
3. Praying over the deceased, and
4. Burying the deceased.

According to Islamic law it is a communal obligation (*farḍ kifāya*) upon the living that these four rights are observed. The first people upon whom this responsibility rests are the heirs. If they neglect to observe this right, or if the deceased does not have any heirs, the Muslims of that particular locality are obliged to ensure that the correct burial procedures are observed. In like manner, the responsibility of the shrouding and the burden of all the funeral expenses are borne by the estate of the deceased. If the deceased has no heirs and a Muslim government does not exist, then the responsibility passes on to the Muslims of that locality.¹ In the case of a wife, the Ḥanafī and Shāfiʿī jurists argue that the funeral expense rests with the husband, while the Mālikī and Ḥanbalī jurists maintain that the expense is taken from the estate. The reason for this is based on their understanding of the extent of the husband's spousal obligation of maintenance. The Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs assert that the husband is responsible for the maintenance necessary for life, and that funeral expenses fall within those responsibilities. This is because they argue that death is a part of life.² The Mālikī and Ḥanbalī jurists argue

¹ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1498.

² Ibid.

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¹ Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1498.

² Ibid.

to the contrary, saying that the obligation of maintenance lasts till death only and not beyond.¹

Washing the Body

Cleanliness is most important and very much emphasised in the religion of Islam. Therefore, it is befitting that the deceased should enter upon this phase of the journey to meeting his Lord in a condition of cleanliness and purity. The main aim in washing the body is to cover the entire body with water, the same as done when one is bathing from seminal defilement (*janāba*). However, the following are the recommended rules, procedures and etiquette for washing the body:

Step 1: It is important that the nakedness from navel to knees of the deceased remain covered at all times. When the clothes are taken off, due diligence must be paid to ensure that the nakedness is not exposed. The person washing the body should place or hold a cloth over the nakedness before proceeding to washing the body. It is unlawful to look at the nakedness of the deceased.

Step 2: Clean away any impurities that may have escaped the body and then give the body an ablution as done for the prayer.

Step 3: Make intention for washing the body of the deceased and then start by washing the head and beard. The water ideally, should be warm and infused with the fragrance of lote tree² leaves, or camphor. Then the entire body is washed three times. A sponge may be used along with soap to rub the body and remove dirt. It is recommended to gently press on the stomach to force out any remaining excretion. The body should be tilted onto the right side so that the back can be washed and the same is repeated on the left side, all the while being sure to keep the private parts covered.

Step 4: The body is then dried with a cloth.

¹ Ibid.

² *Rhamnus spina christi*.

Regarding the Washers of the Body

It is a condition according to the opinion of Shāfi'i and Ḥanbalī jurists that the person washing the body must be a Muslim.¹ If the deceased has non-Muslim relatives they may attend and observe, but the main washing duties must be carried out by a Muslim. The reason for this is because washing the body is a religious duty that Allāh requires to be performed by Muslims. Therefore, if non-Muslims are allowed to carry out this task, the Muslims of the district are guilty of neglecting the command of Allāh Most High. The Ḥanafīs and some Shāfi'īs maintain that non-Muslims may wash the body, but it is disliked.² Their argument is that the main objective is to wash the body in order to clean it. This can be achieved by anyone regardless of faith.

The person washing the body must be sane and ought to be of good character. Men should wash the bodies of males and women should wash the bodies of females. Although an unmarried relative, such as the father, brother, son, uncle and the like may wash the body of a female relation, it is better to leave it to a Muslim of the same gender to carry out this task. However, the Ḥanafīs maintain that if no women are available, an unmarried male relative should perform *tayammum* (dry-ablution) on her and not wash the body, and if no relative is found then *tayammum* should be performed using a glove.³ There is juristic disagreement as to whether or not it is lawful for the husband to wash the body of his dead wife. According to the Ḥanafī jurists it is not permissible, because the marital relationship formalised through a contract has now ceased. The dead person is no longer his wife and therefore she resumes the status of a stranger to him. The majority of scholars

¹ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1487-1490.

² Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1490, Ibn Nujaym, Zayn al-Dīn ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad, *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq Sharḥ Kanz al-Daqā'iq*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, edited by Zakariyyā 'Umayrāt, 2:306.

³ Ibn al-Humām, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid, 1995. *Sharḥ Faṭḥ al-Qadīr*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, edited by 'Abd al-Razzāq Ghālib al-Mahdi (henceforth cited as Ibn al-Humām, *Faṭḥ al-Qadīr*), 2:130.

to the contrary, saying that the obligation of maintenance lasts till death only and not beyond.¹

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on the other hand, uphold the permissibility of a man washing the body of his dead wife, arguing that 'Alī washed the body of his wife Fāṭima.¹ Although there are two sides to the argument, both backed by evidence, it is better to avoid scholarly dissension and leave each gender to wash its own.²

Washing the Body of a Non-Muslim and their Funeral

The obligation of washing the body only applies to a deceased Muslim, and does not extend to non-Muslims. If a non-Muslim dies, Muslims are not obliged to wash the body. Instead the religious funeral rites of the deceased non-Muslim should be observed according to his or her religion and their non-Muslim heirs should attend to it. However, if a Muslim has non-Muslim relatives, and there are no other non-Muslim family members to carry out the funeral rites, the Muslim should wash and shroud the body using one piece of cloth and then bury them. This position is held by the Shāfi'ī jurists, because the Prophet Muḥammad ordered 'Alī to wash and shroud his father, Abū Ṭālib.³ The majority on the other hand maintains that it is not lawful to wash the body; instead the heir should just shroud the body and bury it. However, all jurists unanimously agree that no prayers should be made.⁴

The Funeral of a Stillborn

There is a difference of opinion regarding the funeral rites of a stillborn. Muslim jurists agree that if a child is born and shows signs of life such as crying or movement, the child is named, washed and prayed over. If there are no signs of life then according to the Mālikī and Ḥanafī schools, no prayer is made. According to the Shāfi'ī school if no signs of life are apparent and the child is over

¹ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:387.

² Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1484.

³ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1490.

⁴ Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:132.

four months gestation, the child is washed and shrouded but not prayed over.¹ The same is maintained by the Ḥanafīs provided that the human features of the stillborn have formed.² The Ḥanbalīs maintain that if a stillborn is more than four months gestation, the child should be washed.³ There is really no clear-cut ban in the Qur'ān or Sunna about washing the stillborn, therefore, if parents are emotionally motivated to do something, then there is no harm in it, although it is better to leave it.

Shrouding the Body

After washing the body it is a duty upon Muslims to shroud it. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ was shrouded in three Yemenite white cloths made from cotton (*saḥūliyya*) (*Bukhārī*, 1264).

The deceased should be shrouded in materials that were lawful for them to wear while alive. This means that men should not be shrouded in silk cloth. According to the majority opinion, women can be shrouded in silk, contrary to the Ḥanbalīs who maintain that they ought not to be, on the basis of extravagance and excess.⁴ It is commendable that the shroud is white, and it is obligatory that the shroud not be transparent and impure.⁵

The Size of the Shroud

Men are to be shrouded in three pieces of cloth and women in five. For a man it is:

1. Outer sheet (*lifāfa*) of approximately 8 ft x 5 ft,
2. Tunic (*qamīṣ*) of approximately 5 ft x 4 ft, and
3. Lower wrap (*izār*) of approximately 7 ft x 5 ft.

¹ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1490–1491.

² Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:130.

³ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1491.

⁴ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1490–1499, 1505.

⁵ Ibid.

The same applies to women with the addition of:

4. Chest wrap (*kbirqa*) of approximately 7 ft x 5 ft, and
5. Scarf (*khimār*) of approximately 4 ft x 2 ft.

This is agreed by Muslim jurists. However, they differ regarding the commendable and the minimum number of cloths to be used. It is commendable to apply scent to the entire body and to the shroud using *hanūt*, an aromatic compound of camphor, reed perfume and red and white sandalwood. It is also commendable to apply cotton scented with *hanūt* to the eyes, nose, ears and the limbs used for prostration (such as the forehead, hands, knees).¹

The Procedure for Shrouding the Deceased

After the body has been washed and dried it needs to be transferred to the platform where the shroud has been prepared, all the while ensuring that the nakedness of the deceased is not exposed. One should prepare the shroud by placing the outer sheet first, then the lower wrap and then the tunic on top. The tunic should be folded in half and a slit large enough for the head to fit through should be made in the fold. The upper fold of the tunic should then be rolled back. Once the body is placed on the shrouds with the tunic on top, the head should fit through the slit in the tunic and the other half of it should be unrolled over the body. This will cover the body; meaning that the cloth that is covering the private parts can now be removed. Then the body should be wrapped using the lower wrap and then the outer sheet, ensuring that the shroud is fastened at both ends. The same is observed while enshrouding a woman. The only difference is that after the tunic is put on, her hair is divided into two parts and placed on her chest above the tunic. Then the scarf is put on. This is done by ensuring that the head and hair is fully covered. The cloth covering the private parts is removed and then the lower wrap and outer sheet are put on ensuring that the shroud is fastened at both ends.

¹ Keller, *Reliance*, p. 228; Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:116.

THE FUNERAL PRAYER

After the deceased has been enshrouded it is ready to be prayed over. Women are not obliged to attend the funeral prayer. The procedures for the funeral prayer are generally agreed upon by Muslim jurists. However, they differ slightly on technical issues and the commended supplications to make for the deceased. It is agreed by consensus of all Muslims that there is no bowing (*rukūʿ*) or prostration (*sujūd*) in the funeral prayer. The funeral prayer is performed in congregation.

Funeral Prayer According to the Ḥanafīs

According to the Ḥanafī school there are two essentials of the funeral prayer:

1. To say the opening *takbīr* (*Allāhu akbar*),
2. And then the three subsequent *takbīrs*.

The *sunna* procedure is:

Step one: After the first *takbīr* recite the *thanāʾ*:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ.

Subhānaka 'Llāhumma wa bi-ḥamdika wa tabāraka 'smuka wa ta'ālā jadduka wa lā ilāha ghayruk.

Glory be to You, O Allāh, with Your praise. Blessed is Your Name; Exalted is Your Honour. There is no deity besides You

Step two: After the second *takbīr* recite the blessings on the Prophet ﷺ as done in the standard prayer:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَعَلَى
اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ، اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلَى اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَعَلَى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ فِي الْعَالَمِيْنَ، اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ.

Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadiw wa 'alā āli Muḥammadin
kamā ṣallayta 'alā Ibrāhīma wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīm(a), innaka ḥamī-
dum majīd, wa bārik 'alā Muḥammadiw wa 'alā āli Muḥammadin
kamā bārakta 'alā Ibrāhīma wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīma fi 'l-ālamīn(a),
innaka ḥamīdum majīd.

O Allāh! Send mercy upon Muḥammad and upon the family of
Muḥammad, just as You sent mercy upon Ibrāhīm and upon the
family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Majestic;
and send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of
Muḥammad, just as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon
the family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Majestic.

Step three: After the third *takbīr* recite the appropriate supplication.

If the deceased is an adult male recite:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا، وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا، وَصَغِيْرِنَا وَكَبِيْرِنَا،
وَذَكْرِنَا وَأُنْثَانَا، اَللّٰهُمَّ مَنْ اَخِيَّتَهُ مِنَّا فَاَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْاِسْلَامِ، وَمَنْ
تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْاِيْمَانِ.

Allāhumma 'ghfir li-ḥayyīnā wa mayyitīnā, wa shāhidīnā wa
ghā'ibīnā, wa ṣaghīrīnā wa kabīrīnā, wa dhakarīnā wa unthānā,
Allāhumma man aḥyaytahū minnā fa-aḥyihī 'ala 'l-islām(i), wa
man tawaffaytahū minnā fa-tawaffahū 'ala 'l-imān(i).

If the deceased is an adult female recite:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا، وَشَاهِدِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا، وَصَغِيْرِنَا وَكَبِيْرِنَا، وَذَكْرِنَا
وَأُنْثَانَا، اَللّٰهُمَّ مَنْ اَخِيَّتَهَا مِنَّا فَاَحْيِهَا عَلَى الْاِسْلَامِ، وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتُهَا مِنَّا
فَتَوَفَّهَا عَلَى الْاِيْمَانِ.

Allāhumma 'ghfir li-ḥayyīnā wa mayyitīnā, wa shāhidīnā wa
ghā'ibīnā, wa ṣaghīrīnā wa kabīrīnā, wa dhakarīnā wa unthānā,
Allāhumma man aḥyaytahā minnā fa-aḥyihā 'ala 'l-islām(i), wa
man tawaffaytahā minnā fa-tawaffahā 'ala 'l-imān.

O Allāh, forgive our living and our deceased, our present and
absent, our young and old, our men and women. O Allāh, whom-
ever You give life to, let him/her live in Islam and whomever You
give death to, let him/her die in faith.

Step four: After the fourth *takbīr* remain silent and then the prayer
comes immediately to an end with *salāms*.

One raises the hands for the first *takbīr* only, and for the rest one
simply utters the *takbīr*.

Prayer for a Child

If the deceased is insane or a minor, one performs the prayer in the
same manner described above. However, at step 3 one can recite
the following supplication:

For a deceased boy recite:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ لَنَا قَرْطًا، وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا اَجْرًا وَذُخْرًا، وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا شَافِعًا
وَمُشَفَّعًا.

Allāhumma 'j'alhu lanā faraṭaw, wa 'j'alhu lanā ajraw wa dhukh-
raw, wa 'j'alhu lanā shāfi'aw wa mushaffā'an.

O Allāh, make him one who is sent forth on our behalf, as well
as a reward and a stored treasure for us. Make him an intercessor
for us, and accept his intercession.

For a deceased girl recite:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْهَا لَنَا قَرْطًا، وَاجْعَلْهَا لَنَا اَجْرًا وَذُخْرًا، وَاجْعَلْهَا لَنَا شَافِعًا
وَمُشَفَّعًا.

Allāhumma 'j'alhā lanā faraṭaw, wa 'j'alhā lanā ajraw wa dhukh-
raw, wa 'j'alhā lanā shāfi'aw wa mushaffa'an.

O Allāh, make her one who is sent forth on our behalf, as well
as a reward and a stored treasure for us. Make her an intercessor
for us, and accept her intercession.

Funeral Prayer According to the Mālikīs

The Mālikīs consider there to be five essentials for the funeral prayer:

1. To make intention of praying for the deceased, whether male
or female;
2. To say four *takbīr*s; if the *imām* adds a fifth *takbīr* one pro-
ceeds immediately to finish the prayer with *salāms*. If a person
chooses to wait for the *imām* then that is also valid;
3. To make supplication for the deceased. The minimum is to say,
"Allāhumma 'ghfir lahū/lahā" (O Allāh! Forgive him/her);
4. End the prayer with *salāms*;
5. To perform the prayer standing if one is able to do so.

The *sunna* procedure is:

Step one: After the first *takbīr* recite the *thanā'* and then the bless-
ings on the Prophet ﷺ as done in the standard prayer:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخَيِّبُ الْمَوْتَى، وَهُوَ
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَبَارِكْ
عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ وَبَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى
آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

Al-ḥamdu li-'Llāhi 'lladhī amāta wa ahyā, wa 'l-ḥamdu li-'Llāhi
'lladhī yuhyī 'l-mawtā, wa huwa 'alā kullī shay'in qadīr, Allā-
humma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadiw wa 'alā āli Muḥammad(iw),
wa bārik 'alā Muḥammadiw wa 'alā āli Muḥammad(in), kamā

ṣallayta wa bārakta 'alā Ibrāhīma wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīma fi 'l-'āla-
min(a), innaka ḥamidum majīd.

All praises are due to Allāh, Who causes death and gives life.
All praises are due to Allāh, Who will give life to the dead. He
has power over everything. O Allāh, confer blessings upon
Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad, and favour
Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as You conferred
blessings and favoured the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are
Most Praiseworthy Most Exalted.

Step two: After the second *takbīr* one prays for the deceased. The
minimum is to say,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَهُ/لَهَا.

Allāhumma 'ghfir lahū/lahā (O Allāh, forgive him/her),

Or one can recite the following *du'ā'* for a male:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّهُ عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ، كَانَ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ،
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ مُحْسِنًا فَزِدْ
فِي إِحْسَانِهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ مُسِيئًا فَتَجَاوَزْ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنا أَجْرَهُ
وَلَا تَفْتِنَّا بَعْدَهُ.

Allāhumma innahū 'abduka wa 'bnu 'abdika wa 'bnu amatik(a),
kāna yashhadu al-lā ilāha illā ant(a), wa anna Muḥammadan
'abduka wa rasūluka wa anta a'lamu bih(i), Allāhumma in kāna
muḥsinan fa-zid fi iḥsānih(i), wa in kāna musī'an fa-tajāwaz
'an sayyi'atih(i), Allāhumma lā taḥrimnā ajrahū wa lā taftinnā
ba'dahū.

Or the following for a female:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّهَا أَمَتُكَ وَبِنْتُ عَبْدِكَ وَبِنْتُ أَمَتِكَ، كَانَتْ تَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
أَنْتَ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهَا، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَتْ

مُحْسِنَةً فَرَدَّ فِي إِحْسَانِهَا، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ مُسِيئَةً فَتَجَاوَزْ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهَا، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنا أَجْرَهَا وَلَا تَقْتِنَّا بَعْدَهَا.

Allāhumma innahā amatuka wa bintu ‘abdika wa bintu amatik(a), kānat tashhadu al-lā ilāha illā ant(a), wa anna Muḥammadan ‘abduka wa rasūluka wa anta a‘lamu bihā, Allāhumma in kānat muḥsinatan fa-zid fi iḥsānihā, wa in kānat musī‘atan fa-tajāwaz ‘an sayyi‘ātihā. Allāhumma lā taḥrimnā ajrahā wa lā taftinnā ba‘dahā.

O Allāh, indeed he/she is Your servant, the son/daughter of Your servants. He/she used to testify that there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is Your servant and Messenger. You know best about him/her. O Allāh, if he/she was righteous then increase his/her deeds and if he/she was a wrongdoer then pardon his/her sins. O Allāh, do not deprive us of his/her recompense and do not turn us to sedition after him/her.

Step three: After the third *takbīr* one recites another supplication for the deceased. The minimum is to say, “*Allāhumma ‘ghfir lahū/lahā*” (O Allāh, forgive him/her), or one can read the *du‘ā* according to the Ḥanafī tradition or the same *du‘ā* as above:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّهُ عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ وَابْنُ أَمَتِكَ، كَانَ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ مُحْسِنًا فَرِّدْ فِي إِحْسَانِهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ مُسِيئًا فَتَجَاوَزْ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنا أَجْرَهُ وَلَا تَقْتِنَّا بَعْدَهُ.

And the following for a female:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّهَا أَمَتُكَ وَبِنْتُ عَبْدِكَ وَبِنْتُ أَمَتِكَ، كَانَتْ تَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهَا، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَتْ مُحْسِنَةً فَرِّدْ فِي إِحْسَانِهَا، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ مُسِيئَةً فَتَجَاوَزْ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهَا، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنا أَجْرَهَا وَلَا تَقْتِنَّا بَعْدَهَا.

Step four: After the fourth *takbīr* one recites the following supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِحَيِّنَا وَمَيِّتِنَا وَحَاضِرِنَا وَغَائِبِنَا وَصَغِيرِنَا وَكَبِيرِنَا وَذَكَرِنَا وَأُنْثَانَا، إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلِّبَنَا وَمَمُوتَنَا، وَلَوْلَا دِينُنَا وَلِمَنْ سَبَقَنَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلِلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ، اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ، وَأَسْعِدْنَا بِلِقَائِكَ وَطَيِّبْنَا لِلْمَوْتِ وَطَيِّبَهُ لَنَا، وَاجْعَلْ فِيهِ رَاحَتَنَا وَمَسْرَتَنَا.

Allāhumma ‘ghfir li-ḥayyina wa mayyitina wa ḥādirina wa ghā-ibina wa ṣaghīrina wa kabīrina wa dhakarina wa unthānā, innaka ta‘lamu mutaqaḥḥabana wa mathwānā, wa li-wālidina wa li-man sabaqana bi ‘l-īmān(i), wa li-‘l-muslimīna wa ‘l-muslimāti wa ‘l-mu‘minina wa ‘l-mu‘mināt(i), al-aḥyā‘i minhum wa ‘l-amwāt(i), Allāhumma man aḥyaytahū minnā fa-aḥyihī ‘ala ‘l-īmān(i), wa man tawaffaytahū minnā fa-tawaffahū ‘ala ‘l-Islām(i), wa as‘idnā bi-liqā‘ika wa ṭayyibnā li-‘l-mawti wa ṭayyibhu lanā, wa ‘j‘al fihī rāḥatanā wa masarratanā.

O Allāh, forgive our living and our deceased, our present and absent, our young and old, our men and women. Indeed you know our places of movement and our places of residence. (And forgive) our parents, those who have preceded us with faith, the male and female Muslims, and the male and female believers, the living among them as well as the dead. O Allāh, whomever You give life to, let him live in faith and whomever You give death to, let him die in Islam. Grant us the joy of meeting You. Make us good for death and make death good for us, and let it be our comfort and our happiness.

Step five: One ends the prayer with *salāms*.

Prayer over the Insane or Children According to the Mālikīs

If the deceased is insane or a minor, one performs the prayer in the same manner described above. However, at step 3 one recites the following supplication:

If the deceased is insane or a male minor one recites,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ فَرَطًا لَوَالِدَيْهِ، وَسَلَفًا وَذُخْرًا، وَعِظَةً وَاعْتِبَارًا وَشَفِيعًا، وَثَقُلْ
بِهِ مَوَازِينَهُمَا، وَأَفْرِغِ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمَا.

Allāhumma j'alhu faraṭal li-wālidayh(i), wa salafaw wa dhukhrā, wa 'izataw wa 'tibāraw wa shafi'aw, wa thaqqil bihī mawāzīna-humā, wa afrighi 's-ṣabra 'alā qulūbihimā.

If the deceased is a female minor one recites,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهَا فَرَطًا لَوَالِدَيْهَا، وَسَلَفًا وَذُخْرًا، وَعِظَةً وَاعْتِبَارًا وَشَفِيعًا، وَثَقُلْ
بِهَا مَوَازِينَهُمَا، وَأَفْرِغِ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمَا.

Allāhumma j'alhā faraṭal li-wālidayhā, wa salafaw wa dhukhrā, wa 'izataw wa 'tibāraw wa shafi'aw, wa thaqqil bihā mawāzīna-humā, wa afrighi 's-ṣabra 'alā qulūbihimā.

O Allāh, send him/her ahead to smooth the way for his/her parents, and make him/her a source of reward, a treasure, admonition, reflection, and an intercessor. Make the scales of their good deeds heavy through him/her, and fill their hearts with patience.

Funeral Prayer According to the Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs

The Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs have seven essentials that must be observed for the funeral prayer:

1. To make intention of praying for the deceased, whether male or female;

2. To say four *takbirs*; if the *imām* adds a fifth *takbīr* one follows the *imām*;
3. To recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa after the first *takbīr*;
4. To recite the blessings on the Prophet ﷺ as done in the standard prayer;
5. To make particular supplication for the dead after the third *takbīr*; the minimum is to say, "Allāhumma 'ghfir lahū" (O Allāh! Forgive him);
6. End the prayer with *salāms*;
7. To perform the prayer standing if one is able to do so.

The *sunna* procedure is:

Step one: After the first *takbīr* one recites Sūrat al-Fātiḥa (see appendix).

Step two: After the second *takbīr* one recites the greeting on the Prophet as done in standard prayer. The Shāfi'īs maintain this to be a *sunna* but the Ḥanbalīs consider it to be obligatory (*wājib*).

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى
آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ، وَبَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ، إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ.

Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Muḥammadiw wa 'alā āli Muḥammadin kamā ṣallayta 'alā Ibrāhīma wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīm(a), innaka ḥamīdum majīd(uw), wa bārik 'alā Muḥammadiw wa 'alā āli Muḥammadin kamā bārakta 'alā Ibrāhīma wa 'alā āli Ibrāhīma fi 'l-'ālamīn(a), innaka ḥamīdum majīd.

O Allāh! Send mercy upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad, just as You sent mercy upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Majestic; and send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad, just as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are Praiseworthy and Majestic.

Step three: After the third *takbīr* one recites a supplication for the deceased:

اللَّهُمَّ هَذَا عَبْدُكَ وَابْنُ عَبْدِكَ، خَرَجَ مِنْ رُوحِ الدُّنْيَا وَسَعَتِهَا وَمَحْبُوبِهِ
وَأَجَبْتَهُ فِيهَا إِلَى ظُلْمَةِ الْقَبْرِ وَمَا هُوَ لَاقِيهِ، وَكَانَ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
أَنْتَ وَحْدَكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ، وَأَنْ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ، وَأَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ
بِهِ مِنَّا، اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّهُ نَزَلَ بِكَ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْزُولٍ بِهِ، وَأَصْبَحَ فَقِيرًا إِلَى رَحْمَتِكَ
وَأَنْتَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْ عَذَابِهِ، وَقَدْ جِئْنَاكَ رَاغِبِينَ إِلَيْكَ شُفَعَاءَ لَهُ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ
مُحْسِنًا فَزِدْ فِي إِحْسَانِهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ مُسِيئًا فَتَجَاوَزْ عَنْهُ، وَلَقِّهِ بِرَحْمَتِكَ
وَرِضَاكَ وَقِهِ فِتْنَةَ الْقَبْرِ وَعَذَابَهُ، وَافْسَحْ لَهُ فِي قَبْرِهِ وَجَافِ الْأَرْضَ عَنْ
جَنْبَيْهِ، وَلَقِّهِ بِرَحْمَتِكَ الْأَمْنَ مِنْ عَذَابِكَ حَتَّى تَبْعَثَهُ آمِنًا إِلَى جَنَّتِكَ، يَا
أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ.

Allāhumma hādha 'abduka wa 'bnu 'abdik(a), kharaja mir rūhi
'd-dunyā wa si'atihā, wa maḥbūbihī wa aḥibbā'ihī fihā ilā zulmati
'l-qabri wa mā huwa lāqīh(i), wa kāna yashhadu al-lā ilāha illā
anta waḥdaka lā sharīka lak(a), wa anna Muḥammadan 'abduka
wa rasūluk(a), wa anta a'lamu bihī minnā, Allāhumma innahū
nazala bika wa anta khayru manzūlin bih(i), wa asbaḥa faqīran
ilā raḥmatika wa anta ghaniyyun 'an adhābihī, wa qad jī'naka
rāghibīna ilayka shufa'ā'a lah(ū), Allāhumma in kāna muḥsinan
fa-zid fi iḥsānih(i), wa in kāna musī'an fa-tajāwaz 'anh(u), wa
laqqihī bi-raḥmatika wa riḍāka wa qihī fitnat al-qabri wa 'adhā-
bah(ū), wa 'fsaḥ lahū fi qabrihī wa jāfi 'l-arḍa 'an janbayh(i), wa
laqqihī bi-raḥmatik al-amna min 'adhābika ḥattā tab'athahū ilā
jannatik(a), yā arḥam al-rāḥimīn.

O Allāh this is Your slave, the son of Your slave, he has left the
life of this world and its spaciousness in which were the things
and people he loved, for the darkness of the grave and that
which he will meet. He testified that there is no god but You
alone without a partner, and that Muḥammad is Your slave and

Messenger. You know him better than we do. O Allāh, he has
gone to remain with You, and You are the best to remain with.
He is now in need of Your mercy, and You have no need to punish
him. We come to You in desire of You, interceding for him. O
Allāh, if he did good, treat him better and if he did wrong dis-
regard it and through Your mercy show him Your good pleasure
and protect him from the trials and torment of the grave. Make
his grave spacious for him and distance the earth from his sides,
and through Your mercy protect him from Your torment until
You raise him and send him safely to Your Paradise. O Most
Merciful of the merciful.

If the deceased is a female then one would substitute the beginning
of the prayer with the following: *Allāhumma hādhibi amatuka wa
bintu 'abdik*, and the male pronouns for female pronouns throughout.

Step four: According to the Shāfi'is, after the fourth *takbīr* one
recites:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنَا مِنْ أَجْرِهِ وَلَا تَقْتِنَا بَعْدَهُ.

Allāhumma lā taḥrimnā min ajrihī wa lā taftinnā ba'dah.

If the deceased is a female read the following:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَحْرِمْنَا مِنْ أَجْرِهَا وَلَا تَقْتِنَا بَعْدَهَا.

Allāhumma lā taḥrimnā min ajrihā wa lā taftinnā ba'dahā.

O Allāh, do not deprive us of his/her recompense and do not
turn us to sedition after him/her.

The Ḥanbalīs maintain that one stands for a short while after the
fourth *takbīr*.

Prayer over the Insane or Children According to the Shāfi'is and Ḥanbalis

If the deceased is insane or a minor one would performs the prayer in the same manner described above. However, at step 3 one recites the following supplication:

If the deceased is insane or a male minor one recites,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ فَرَطًا لَوَالِدَيْهِ، وَسَلَفًا وَذُخْرًا، وَعِظَةً وَاعْتِبَارًا وَشَفِيعًا، وَتَقْلًا
بِهِ مَوَازِينُهُمَا، وَأَفْرِغِ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمَا.

Allāhumma j'alhu faraṭal li-wālidayh(i), wa salafaw wa dhukhrā, wa 'izataw wa 'tibāraw wa shafi'aw, wa thaqqil bihī mawāzīna-humā, wa afrighi 'ṣ-ṣabra 'alā qulūbihimā.

If the deceased is a female minor one recites,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهَا فَرَطًا لَوَالِدَيْهَا، وَسَلَفًا وَذُخْرًا، وَعِظَةً وَاعْتِبَارًا وَشَفِيعًا،
وَتَقْلًا بِهَا مَوَازِينُهُمَا، وَأَفْرِغِ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمَا.

Allāhumma j'alhā faraṭal li-wālidayhā, wa salafaw wa dhukhrā, wa 'izataw wa 'tibāraw wa shafi'aw, wa thaqqil bihā mawāzīna-humā, wa afrighi 'ṣ-ṣabra 'alā qulūbihimā.

O Allāh, send him/her ahead to smooth the way for his/her parents, and make him/her a source of reward, a treasure, admonition, reflection, and an intercessor. Make the scales of their good deeds heavy through him/her, and fill their hearts with patience.

What Should the Latecomer to the Funeral Prayer Do

A person who has missed any parts of the funeral prayer is treated in the same way as a *masbūq*, or latecomer, in the standard prayers. However, since the procedure of the funeral prayer is different to standard prayers the jurists have differed as to how a *masbūq* should join the prayer and how he should complete it. According to the

Ḥanafis and Mālikīs the *masbūq* should join the prayer and remain silent. At the next *takbīr* the *masbūq* should utter the *takbīr* intending it to be the first *takbīr*. After the *imām* has finished, the *masbūq* should complete the prayer he has missed by himself. If he fears that the deceased will be removed, then no supplication should be made. Instead, the *masbūq* should simply say the *takbīrs* he missed and finish the prayer.¹

According to the Shāfi'is the *masbūq* should join the funeral prayer and recite the Fātiḥa regardless of whatever *takbīr* the *imām* is on. However, if the *imām* starts another *takbīr* before the *masbūq* is able to finish the Fātiḥa, the latecomer should cease reciting the Fātiḥa and start to recite the next supplication. After the *imām* has finished, the *masbūq* should complete the prayer by himself.² The Ḥanbalis maintain that the *masbūq* should join the prayer and continue from where the *imām* is. If the *masbūq* ends the prayer along with the *imām* then that is valid. However, if the *masbūq* wishes to complete the funeral prayer by himself, then that too is commendable.³

Performing the Funeral Prayer More than Once for the Same Person

The customary practice is that the funeral prayer is carried out only once for a person. However, at times this may not be possible. This could be for a number of reasons such as missing the funeral or due to a lack of facilities to cater for the attendees. Especially when notable individuals such as great scholars die, the number of attendees is much greater. In such circumstances there is a need

¹ Ibn 'Abidin, *Hāshiya*, 1:819–821; *Al-Sharḥ al-Ṣaghir*, 1:556 quoted via Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1525.

² Shīrīnī, *Al-Mughnī l-Muḥtāj*, 1:344 quoted via Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1526.

³ Ibn Qudāma, Abū Muḥammad 'Abdillāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, 1929. *Al-Mughnī*, together with *Al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr*, Cairo: Dār al-Manār (henceforth cited as Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*), 2:494; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:139 quoted via Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1527.

to perform the funeral prayer more than once. While the Ḥanafis maintain that it is disliked to perform the funeral prayer for the same person more than once, the Shāfi'is and Ḥanbalis maintain that there is no problem in repeating the funeral prayer. However, if the person is buried then all scholars maintain that the funeral prayer for the dead is still permissible, provided that the body has not begun to decompose. The rate of decomposition of the body will vary from area to area and will depend on the season and climate. The lawfulness of performing funeral prayer more than once for the same person can be found in the practise of the Prophet ﷺ. It is narrated that a (male or female) person who used to clean the mosque died. The Prophet did not know of their death. One day the Prophet remembered about the person and enquired after them. Someone replied that they had died. The Prophet responded by asking why he was not told about this. The people replied that perhaps the person was not significant and they did not want to bother the Prophet with this matter. The Prophet asked to be shown to the grave. The Prophet went there and performed the funeral prayer for them (*Bukhārī*, 1337).

The Funeral for a Person who has Committed Suicide

Suicide is a grave sin in Islam. Both the Qur'ān and the teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ are clear regarding people who decide to kill themselves. Allāh says in the Qur'ān, "Do not kill yourselves, for Allāh is compassionate toward you. Whoever does so, in transgression and wrongfully, We shall roast him in a fire, and that is an easy matter for Allāh" (Q 4:29-30).

The teachings of the Prophet ﷺ are equally damning. Condemning suicide in strong terms it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Of those before you, there was once a wounded man who could not bear it, so he took a knife and cut his arm, and bled until he died. Allāh Most High said, 'My slave has taken his life before I have, so I forbid him Paradise'" (*Muslim*, 307).

Bukhārī narrates on the authority of Abū Hurayra, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "He who commits suicide by throttling shall keep on throttling himself in the Hellfire, and he who commits suicide by stabbing himself shall keep on stabbing himself in the Hellfire" (*Bukhārī*, 1365).

In another ḥadīth it is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever kills himself with a knife will forever abide in the fire of hell, perpetually stabbing his belly with it. Whoever kills himself with poison will forever abide in the fire of hell, ingesting poison perpetually" (*Muslim*, 2168).¹

There is no doubt regarding the enormous sin of committing suicide. However, it is a sad fact that suicide does occur in Muslim societies. Although some scholars, like Abū Yūsuf and Ibn al-Humām viewed having funeral prayer for a person who committed suicide as unlawful, the vast majority of scholars have maintained that such a person should be washed and prayed over, like any other Muslim.² This ought to be the action taken by Muslims. The person driven to take his own life now has to account for his or her actions in front of their Maker. It is better that the living pray for them and perhaps Allāh, through His divine mercy, may accept the prayers of their heirs and pardon them for this pointless self-transgression. Although there is a ḥadīth recorded that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ did not pray the funeral prayer for a man who had committed suicide,³ it does not, however, prove the absolute prohibition of praying for such people. Rather, the Prophet's action denotes his deep disapproval of committing suicide and serves as a warning to others of the consequences of such an action. This is proven by the fact that although the Prophet ﷺ did not pray for that person he did not prohibit his Companions from performing the funeral prayer.

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Beirut: Dār al-Jil (nd), 2168, 1:72.

² Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1509-1510.

³ It is narrated on the authority of Jābir ibn Samura that the body of a dead man who had killed himself with a broad-headed arrow was brought before the Apostle of Allāh ﷺ, but he did not offer prayer for him (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2133).

to perform the funeral prayer more than once. While the Hanafis maintain that it is disliked to perform the funeral prayer for the same person more than once, the Shāfi'is and Hanbalis maintain that there is no problem in repeating the funeral prayer. However, if the person is buried then all scholars maintain that the funeral prayer for the dead is still permissible, provided that the body has not begun to decompose. The rate of decomposition of the body will vary from area to area and will depend on the season and climate. The lawfulness of performing funeral prayer more than once for the same person can be found in the practise of the Prophet ﷺ. It is narrated that a (male or female) person who used to clean the mosque died. The Prophet did not know of their death. One day the Prophet remembered about the person and enquired after them. Someone replied that they had died. The Prophet responded by asking why he was not told about this. The people replied that perhaps the person was not significant and they did not want to bother the Prophet with this matter. The Prophet asked to be shown to the grave. The Prophet went there and performed the funeral prayer for them (*Bukhārī*, 1337).

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This proves that the Prophet ﷺ did not lead the funeral prayer in order to express his deep disapproval rather than prohibiting the funeral prayer entirely. Based on this, the appointed *imām* of the mosque may choose not to lead the funeral prayer for a person who committed suicide.

Funeral Prayer for the Deceased in Absentia (*Ṣalāt al-Ghā'ib*)

There is a difference of opinion regarding the permissibility of performing the funeral prayer for a dead person whose body is not present, or where attending the funeral is very difficult. The Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs are of the opinion that such a prayer is not valid, because they argue that it is a condition that the deceased be present in order to pray over it. On the other hand, the Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs argue that funeral prayer in the absence of the deceased is valid. They argue on the grounds of a very authentic tradition stipulating that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ prayed for King Negus (may Allāh be pleased with him) when he heard that he had died.¹ In response to this argument the Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs assert that this tradition is interpreted to be a special privilege for the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and not something that is extended to his followers. It is noteworthy, however, that *ṣalāt al-ghā'ib* is only valid according to its proponents before the body starts to decompose, which some scholars maintain to be one month.²

Funeral Prayer for Children and the Stillborn

No prayer for forgiveness is due for a child who has died before attaining the age of puberty. This is because children are considered

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1333, 1334.

² Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 2:494; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:139 quoted via Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1527.

to be sinless in Islam; therefore, supplication for their forgiveness would be pointless. Instead, prayer is made for their parents that Allāh forgives them and shows them mercy and compassion. This is agreed by all scholars. In the death of an infant, the existence of life is established by the slightest sign of life such as a slight movement, cough, cry, and the like. However, scholars differ regarding the validity of the funeral prayer for a stillborn. While a majority of scholars maintains that there is no prayer for a stillborn, the Ḥanbalīs assert that prayer is made for a stillborn, provided that four months of gestation has elapsed. They argue on the grounds of a tradition that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A stillborn is prayed over; the supplication should consist of praying for the parents for forgiveness and mercy."¹

¹ Ṭayālīsī, Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd, nd. *Musnad al-Ṭayālīsī*, Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1:96.

THE BURIAL

Muslims should hasten to inter the body after the prayer is complete. The grave should be of such depth that the body is concealed and that no odour may escape through the ground. It should also be of such depth that it is protected from animals burrowing the ground and reaching the body. The tradition in Islam is that graves should be in a *lahd* design. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The *lahd* design is for us" (*Abū Dāwūd*, 3207). That is to say, that the grave has a side recess at the bottom large enough for the deceased to fit into. However, in places where the softness of the soil does not allow this, a *shiqq* design, where a trench is dug at the bottom of the pit large enough for the deceased to fit into, is also permitted. It is also recommended that the body be facing the *qibla*. This can be achieved by leaning the left side of the body against the wall or placing additional soil under it. Men should bury the dead. However, only close family members should place women in the grave.

What to Say When Burying the Dead

Once the deceased is placed in the grave, it is recommended for the people burying the dead to say, *Bismi 'Llāh wa 'alā sunnati Rasūli 'Llāh* (In the name of Allāh and on the Sunna of the Messenger of Allāh).

It is related from the Prophet ﷺ on the authority of Ibn 'Umar that when the deceased is placed in the grave one should say, "In the name of Allāh and on the Sunna of the Messenger of Allāh" (*Abū Dāwūd*, 3213),

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three times toward the head of the dead. It is recorded that the Prophet ﷺ prayed over a person and then came to his grave and scattered soil on the head thrice" (*Ibn Māja*).¹ In another narration mentioned by Imām Aḥmad, it is related that when the Prophet ﷺ placed his daughter Umm Kulthūm in her grave he said [while scattering three handfuls of soil on her],

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ، وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى.

Minhā khalaqnākum wa fihā nu'īdukum wa minhā nukhrijukum tāratan ukhrā.

From the earth We created you, into it We shall return you, and from it We shall raise you a second time.²

The remaining soil should then be put back into the grave. One should take care to leave the grave raised to approximately 15 cm. It is narrated that the grave of the Prophet was raised to that level.³

Talqīn for the Dead and the Supplication to Make after Burial

Talqīn means to instruct the dead to remember the tenets of Islam after the burial has taken place. Not all scholars agree with this practice. The Ḥanafī and Mālikī scholars prefer that no *talqīn* should be made. But the Shāfi'ī and Ḥanbalī jurists state that it is commendable to perform the *talqīn*.⁴ They argue on the grounds of a weak tradition that supports this type of action. For instance, it is related that after burial one should stand at the head of the deceased and instruct him in the following manner:

¹ Ibn Māja, Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, nd. *Sunan Ibn Māja*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, edited by Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī and notes by Albānī (henceforth cited as *Sunan Ibn Māja*), 1:499.

² Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad, 2001, *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, Beirut: Al-Risāla, 22187, 26:524.

³ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1551–52.

⁴ Shīrbīnī, *Al-Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:367; Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:157, Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 2:506 quoted via Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1565.

O servant of Allāh, the son of a slave of Allāh, recall from whence you existed from the abode of the world. Bear witness that there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh; and that the Garden is true; the Fire is true; resurrection is true; The Hour is coming there is no doubt; and Allāh will resurrect those in the graves; indeed you have accepted Allāh as your Lord and Islam as your religion and Muḥammad as your Prophet; and the Qur'ān as a leader; and the Ka'ba as the *qibla* and all believers are brothers.

If a person wishes to say this, he can do so in English or any other language.¹

It is recorded by Abū Dāwūd on the authority of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ would stand by the grave after burial and instruct us to seek forgiveness for our brother because he is being questioned in the grave (*Abū Dāwūd*, 3221). One should ask Allāh to forgive the dead and to make him or her steadfast. There are some other traditions that indicate that the Prophet's Companions would supplicate for the dead after their burial. The people burying the dead should instruct them to say, *Lā ilāha illa Llāh* (There is no god but Allāh), three times, and "O so-and so, say: *"Rabbi Allāh, wa dinī al-Islām, wa nabiyyī Muḥammad"* (My Lord is Allāh, my religion is Islam, and my Prophet is Muḥammad).²

It is recorded by Ibn Māja that Ibn 'Umar used to say when levelling the grave,

اللَّهُمَّ أَجِرْهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ، وَمِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ، اللَّهُمَّ جَافِ الْأَرْضَ عَنْ جَنْبَيْهَا، وَصَعِّدْ رُوحَهَا، وَلَقِّهَا مِنْكَ رِضْوَانًا.

Allāhumma ajirhā min ash-shaytān(i), wa min 'adhāb al-qabr(i), Allāhumma jāfi 'l-arḍa 'an jambayhā, wa ṣa'id rūḥahā, wa laqqihā minkā riḍwānā.

¹ This ḥadīth has been narrated by Ṭabarānī in his *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*. Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī remarks in his *Majma' al-Zawā'id* that this chain of narration has people I do not know, but Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī asserts that the chain is sound (Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:89).

² Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:450.

O Allāh, save the person from satan, and from the punishment of the grave. O Allāh widen the grave for the person and elevate the soul and grant it Your pleasure" (*Ibn Māja*).¹

Ibn 'Umar was related to have commended the recitation of the opening verses of Sūrat al-Baqara at the head of the grave and its final verses at the foot of the grave after the burial.²

Placing a Headstone

It is narrated that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ forbade plastering over the grave, writing on the grave, building on the grave and walking over the grave (*Muslim*, 2245). Although scholars have differed regarding the details and interpretation of this tradition they have, however, agreed that it is disliked to write the name of the deceased on a headstone and place it on the grave.³ Shawkānī has taken a more strict view arguing that it is unlawful (*ḥarām*).⁴ A more lenient view can be found with the Ḥanafis, who maintain that a headstone is permissible to identify the dead.⁵ This is a very practical view, especially because public graveyards have many hundreds of people buried there, and it would be very difficult for people to remember the grave of their loved ones without a headstone to identify it. If however, the burial place is on private land and not open to the public, then headstones should not be placed. However, if the private land also has multiple graves and it is difficult to identify the different graves, there is no harm in placing headstones there too. It is also noteworthy that writing verses of the Qur'ān on the headstone brings no added benefit to the deceased and should be avoided. Although the Mālikīs consider writing Qur'ānic

¹ *Sunan Ibn Māja*, 1:495. The ḥadith is weak according to Arna'ūt.

² Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, *Al-Da'wat al-Kabir*, Kuwait: Ghiras, 2:297.

³ Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1553.

⁴ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:446.

⁵ Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1553.

verses on headstones to be unlawful, other positions suggest that it is seriously offensive.¹

Transporting the Body to another Country for Burial

Sometimes, due to cultural or sentimental reasons, the dying stipulate that they should be buried in a country different to the place of their death. This occurs mostly for Muslims living in non-Muslim majority countries. For some people the hope of resting finally in the country of their birth or origin means a lot. But to what extent is this practice permissible in Islamic law? Muslim jurists are divided regarding the permissibility of this, and their views can be grouped into three opinions:

1. Mālikīs maintain that burial in the country of death is preferable, they also do not see a problem in transporting the body from one country to another so long as it has not previously been buried.²
2. The Ḥanafis are similar regarding the preference of burying the dead at the place of death. However, they maintain that the body should not be transported beyond a mile or two. If done, it is disliked (*makrūh*), unless there is a good reason to do so.³
3. The Shāfi'īs maintain that transferring the body from one country to another is not permissible.
4. The Ḥanbalīs maintain that if there is a need to transfer the body from one country to another then there is no problem in doing so. However, if there is no need to transport the body, then it is disliked. It is better to bury the deceased in the country they died in.⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1537.

³ Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Idāh*, 194; Burhān al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Bukhārī, *Al-Muḥīṭ al-Burhānī fi 'l-Fiqh al-Nu'mānī*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 5:359-360; *Fatāwā Hindīyya*, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1:167.

⁴ Ibid., p. 1558.

Exhuming the Body for Burial Elsewhere

The permissibility of exhuming the body for transportation to another country for burial has split the jurists. According to the Mālikīs and Ḥanbalīs, exhuming the body for the sake of the best interests of the deceased is permissible. The Shāfi'īs argue that it is not permissible unless in a case of dire exigency (*ḍarūra*). The Ḥanafīs on the other hand, consider it to be unlawful. The proponents of each view based their argument on the principle of affording the deceased the utmost respect. The Mālikī, Shāfi'ī and Ḥanbalī view is that exhuming the body is permissible only under special circumstances and to safeguard the honour of the dead. For example, if it is known that the place where a person is buried is likely to be flooded and the corpse thereby exposed to animals, then in such cases exhuming the body is lawful in order to protect the dead. The Ḥanafī view is also based on the principle of preserving the honour of the dead. For them exhuming the body is seen as dishonouring the dead and therefore the body should not be exhumed.¹

Visiting Graves

Visiting graves is a great act of worship that the living can do to help the dead. It is important that visitors to the grave observe Islamic decorum and not allow their emotions to lead them into committing *bid'a* or performing improper actions.² Improper conduct does not benefit the dead in any way. Rather, the living are themselves harmed by such actions. If the emotions cannot be controlled then it is not lawful for such a person to visit graves. During the initial stages of Islam Allāh and His Messenger had proscribed visiting graves. After a period this ban was lifted and Muslims were now not only permitted to visit graves but encouraged to do so. It is nar-

¹ For further discussions and references to ḥadīth, see Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṣār*, 4:474; Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1558.

² Such as wailing and screaming.

rated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I used to forbid you from visiting graves, but now Muḥammad has been granted permission to visit the grave of his mother. So visit the graves because it will remind you of the hereafter" (*Tirmidhī*, 1054). In another narration it is recorded that the Prophet ﷺ came to the grave of his mother and cried, so the people around him cried too. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, "I asked permission from my Lord to seek forgiveness for my mother, but He did not grant me the permission; so, I sought His permission to visit my mother's grave and He granted me that. So visit the graves because it will remind you of death" (*Muslim*, 976). This section will explain the lawful way to visit the graves and the supplications that can be made there.

Men visiting graves is permissible by the agreement of all the jurists of the four schools of thought.¹ However, jurists disagree regarding the permissibility of women visiting graves. Although some Mālikī and Ḥanafī jurists maintain that it is impermissible for young women to visit graves, but permissible for older women,² the general opinion among the majority of jurists is that it is lawful for women to visit graves provided they control their emotions and avoid wailing and screaming or crying in a loud voice. The reason for this difference of opinion is because there are some prophetic traditions that mention the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ having prohibited and cursed women who visited graves. Expert scholars of ḥadīth have interpreted those traditions to be only directed at women who wail, scream or cry in a loud voice. Both ḥadīth scholars and jurists maintain that if improper actions such as crying aloud and wailing are avoided then a rapprochement between the two conflicting traditions would suggest that prohibiting women from visiting graves is qualified and does not act as a general rule. Shawkānī commenting on the different views of scholars remarks that if women avoid wailing and screaming or crying in a loud voice then there

¹ Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, 1:31.

² Old women are usually considered to be those who have passed the age of child-bearing. Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, 1:31; Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1570.

is no harm in them visiting graves.¹ Athram records in his collection of ḥadīth that ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Mulayka met ‘Ā’isha ؓ who was returning from the graveyard. He enquired, “Where are you returning from, Mother of the Believers?” ‘Ā’isha replied, “From the graveyard.” ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Mulayka queried, “Did not the Prophet ﷺ forbid visiting graves?” ‘Ā’isha replied, “Yes, initially he did and then he allowed it.”²

What to Recite When Visiting Graves

The Sharī‘a has not stipulated any prescribed litanies to recite when visiting graves. Although there are no set litanies to recite, excessive and exaggerated litanies should be avoided. The basic concept of visiting graves is to gain the realisation that death cannot be cheated, and one day, just like the person in the grave, you too will join them. It is to provoke reflection, contemplation, to shock the system out of the state of delusion that sees the world as permanent, to remind people that death knocks on their doors every day. Secondly, visiting graves provides an opportunity to pray for the dead. We know from the teachings of Islam that the dead can no longer perform ritual and spiritual actions of devotion, and we also know that the living can benefit the dead by praying for them. The visitors should seize the opportunity to reflect on death and to pray for the deceased.

It is related on the authority of Abū Hurayra ؓ who said that the Prophet ﷺ came to a graveyard and said,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ دَارَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ، وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَا حِقُونَ.

As-salāmu ‘alaykum dār qawmim mu’minīn(a), wa innā inshā Allāhu bikum lāḥiqūn.

Peace be upon you, abode of the nation of believers, and we will God-willing join you soon” (*Muslim*, 584).

¹ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:473.

² Recorded by Athram in his *Sunan*. See Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:472.

In another tradition related by Burayda, the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions to say,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَا حِقُونَ، نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ.

As-salāmu ‘alaykum ahl ad-diyārī min al-mu’minīna wa ‘l-muslimīn(a), wa innā inshā Allāhu bikum lāḥiqūn(a), nas’alu ‘Llāha lanā wa lakumu ‘l-‘āfiya.

Peace be upon you, O dwellers of the grave from among the Muslims and faithful ones. We will, God-willing, join you soon. We ask Allāh for forgiveness for you and for us (*Muslim*, 2257).

It is commendable to read Sūra Yāsīn (see appendix). It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whosoever enters a graveyard and reads Sūra Yāsīn over the dead, Allāh will lessen the punishment for them for that day.” In another tradition it is related that the Prophet ﷺ instructed Muslims to recite Sūra Yāsīn to the dying, “Yāsīn is the heart of the Qur’ān. Nothing will happen to a person who reads it wanting Allāh and the Abode of the Hereafter except that Allāh will forgive him. So recite Yāsīn upon the dying” (*Abū Dāwūd*, 3121). It is also commendable to read Fātiḥa, the first five verses of Sūrat al-Baqara, Āyat al-Kursī, Sūrat al-Mulk, Sūrat al-Takāthur, Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ twelve times or three times, and Sūrat al-Nās and Sūrat al-Falaq (for these *sūras*, see appendix).²

One should then take the opportunity to pray for the dead and ask forgiveness for them. It is better for a person to pray for all the dead rather than just the person he or she is visiting. It is also noteworthy that the ḥadīths reporting the virtue of reciting certain sections of the Qur’ān a certain number of times are weak. Not all classical scholars agree with reciting Qur’ān at gravesides. Their main objection centres on a lack of strong evidence to back up such

¹ Mentioned in *Al-Baḥr al-Rā’iq* (ḥadīth scholars have classified this ḥadīth as weak). Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1569.

² Ibid.

actions. The scholars who support the recitation of the Qur'an at the grave admit the weakness of these traditions, but nevertheless maintain that acting upon weak traditions for the sake of virtue (*faḍā'il*) is permitted.

Visitors to graveyards should avoid walking over the graves and sitting on them.¹ This has been prohibited by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.² Visitors should stand nearby the grave, preferably facing the deceased, and make spiritual supplications of reflection, forgiveness and help for the deceased.³

¹ Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, 1:34, Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:448.

² Previously discussed. See Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:448.

³ Zuḥaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1571.

DONATING REWARDS TO THE DECEASED (*Īṣāl al-Thawāb*)

Donating Rewards to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ

The Arabic term for the concept of the posthumous donation of reward is called *īṣāl al-thawāb*. What *īṣāl al-thawāb* means is that a living person would seek to donate the reward of his or her good deeds upon the soul of a deceased. *Īṣāl al-thawāb* can be done either by physical actions such as prayer and fasting, or by monetary donations, or by the recitation of the Qur'an. Although *īṣāl al-thawāb* is a well established tradition in Islam, the different methods of performing it are not agreed upon by Muslim jurists. There are two aspects of *īṣāl al-thawāb*: one is related to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and the other relates to other Muslims.

Regarding performing *īṣāl al-thawāb* for the sake of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ there is scholarly consensus that Muslims are allowed to offer greetings to the Prophet Muḥammad. Muslims offer greetings to the Prophet Muḥammad on different occasions such as during the five daily prayers and when his name is mentioned at gatherings. The act of offering greetings to the Prophet Muḥammad is an extremely noble deed. Not only humans and angels engage in offering blessings and salutations to the Prophet, but Allāh Himself sends His blessings on the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Allāh tells us in the Qur'an, "Indeed Allāh and His angels send blessings on the Prophet, O you who believe, send your blessings and peace upon him" (Q 33:56).

It is related from Ka'b ibn 'Ujra ؓ that he said, "We said to the Prophet, 'O Prophet of Allāh, you have commanded us to

invoke blessings on you and to salute you. We have already learned salutation. How should we invoke blessings on you?" The Prophet said, "Say, 'O Allāh send peace to Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as You sent peace to Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm. O Allāh bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, as You blessed Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm. Indeed, You are Most Praiseworthy and Most Gracious" (*Abū Dāwūd*, 971).

There is no difference of opinion regarding the validity of this, and it is a fact that the greetings and salutations of the Prophet Muḥammad's followers reach him. The point of scholastic difference is regarding the validity of doing other acts of worship such as *ḥajj*, *ʿumra*, sacrifice (*udḥiyya*), and recitation of the Qurʾān for the sake of the Prophet ﷺ. There are two opinions regarding this.

The first view: This group of scholars believes that donating the reward for acts of worship to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is valid. This means that if a person were to perform *ʿumra* with the intention of donating the reward of it to the Prophet Muḥammad it is valid. This is the apparent position of the Ḥanafī and Mālikī schools. The famous Ḥanafī jurist Ibn ʿĀbidīn writes,

The view of our scholars is that it is valid to donate the reward of actions to another person. This includes the Prophet ﷺ. This is also the opinion of Subkī, Ibn Ḥajar al-Makkī, and other Shāfiʿī jurists, and some early and later Ḥanbalī scholars such as Ibn ʿAqīl who maintained that it is commendable to donate the reward for reciting the Qurʾān to the Prophet ﷺ.¹

The second view: The proponents of this view maintained that the act of donating the reward for acts of worship to the Prophet ﷺ is not

1 Ibn ʿĀbidīn, Muḥammad Amīn, 1994. *Hāshiya Ibn ʿĀbidīn ʿalā Radd al-Muḥtār ʿalā ʾl-Durr al-Mukhtār Sharḥ Tanwīr al-ʾAbṣār*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʾIlmiyya, edited by ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʾawwid (henceforth cited as Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Hāshiya*), 1:666, 2:236; Ḥaṭṭāb, Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Maghribī, nd. *Marwāhib al-Jalīl li-Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar al-Khalīl*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʾIlmiyya (henceforth cited as Ḥaṭṭāb, *Marwāhib al-Jalīl*), 2:544; Ibn al-Qayyim, Abū ʿAbdillāh Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr, nd. *Al-Rūḥ*, Cairo: Maktabat Naṣīr, p. 230.

valid. This opinion is the popular view among Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī jurists. Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-Ḥawwārī said regarding reciting the Fātiḥa,¹

The reward of it does not reach the dead. Tāj al-Dīn al-Farrāzī prohibited the concept of donating the reward of reciting Fātiḥa to the Prophet ﷺ. Many other Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī jurists spoke strongly about this concept and inclined toward believing it to be an innovation (*bidʿa*). Ibn Taymiyya outspokenly declared it as an innovation and said that it should not be practised.²

The Evidences

The proponents of the first view argue that the concept of donating rewards to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ can be found in his own teachings. It is related that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib used to sacrifice two rams for himself and two rams for the Prophet ﷺ and then say, "The Prophet commanded me to sacrifice an animal on his behalf so I sacrifice an animal on his behalf."³ This tradition shows that ʿAlī sacrificed an animal on behalf of the Prophet ﷺ with the view that just as he would hope to be rewarded for offering a sacrifice for himself, the Prophet ﷺ would also receive the reward of the second sacrificed animal done in his name. ʿAlī's action therefore, proves that donating rewards to the Prophet ﷺ is valid. What further strengthens this argument is the fact that Ibn ʿUmar used to perform *ʿumra* on behalf of the Prophet ﷺ after his death without the Prophet stipulating it.⁴ The proponents of this theory thus developed an extension of this principle, arguing that any act of worship could be donated to the Prophet ﷺ. The jurists with the opposing view argue that the concept of donating reward for reciting Fātiḥa or otherwise is something that has not been related to us clearly by the Prophet ﷺ. They deny that any Companion of the Prophet

1 The first *sūra* of the Qurʾān.

2 Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Hāshiya*, 1:666, 2:236; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Marwāhib al-Jalīl*, 2:544; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, p. 230.

3 Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī, nd. *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, Pakistan: Idāra Talīfāt-i Ashrafiyya, 9:288.

4 Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, p. 230.

ﷺ practised this type of *iṣāl al-thawāb*, and hence this led them to believe that such actions are innovations.

The views of the second group of scholars, who reject the validity of donating rewards to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ have largely based their arguments on the speculation that none of the Companions ever practised it and therefore it must be an innovation. The problem with this line of argument is that it falls short of the fact that both 'Alī and Ibn 'Umar performed acts of worship, donating the reward of it to the Prophet ﷺ. The jurists of the first group have on the other hand used ḥadīth to substantiate their views. This builds a good case to argue for the permissibility of donating the reward of good deeds to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ.

Donating Rewards to Other Deceased Muslims

Although the concept of donating to the deceased is not rejected outright by jurists they are, however, in disagreement regarding the validity of *iṣāl al-thawāb* vis-à-vis donating the reward of certain types of worship to the deceased.

There is no difference of opinion among jurists that sacrificing an animal on the occasion of 'Īd al-Aḍḥā on behalf of the deceased, charity, paying off debts without the prior request of the deceased, and praying for his forgiveness and mercy for him, are valid and permissible. Nawawī and Ibn Qudāma go further and claim that there is consensus of opinion regarding its validity.¹ The evidence for this can be found in the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth. There are many verses in the Qur'ān where prayer is made for those who have passed away. Allāh says in the Qur'ān,

O Lord! You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so

¹ Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 2:40; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 2:567; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:147; Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awtār*, 4:142; Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Muḥy al-Dīn ibn Sharaf, 1955. *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr (henceforth cited as Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*), 1:90, 8:25.

forgive those who have repented and followed Your way and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire. O Lord, admit them to the gardens of perpetual residence, which You have promised them and whoever was righteous among their fathers, their spouses and their offspring. Indeed, it is You who is the exalted in might, the Wise. And protect them from the evil consequences (of their deeds). And whom You protect from evil consequences that Day You have shown them mercy. And that is the greatest achievement (Q 40:7-9).

In like manner Allāh teaches us to pray for our parents, "O my Lord, have mercy upon them (the parents) like they brought me up when I was young" (Q 17:24).

Allāh talks about the virtue of those who pray for their brethren in faith, "And those who came after them, saying: 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts any resentment towards those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are kind and merciful'" (Q 59:10).

In like manner, Allāh tells us of the prayer Prophet Nūḥ ﷺ made, "My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whoever enters my house as a believer, and the believing men and women. And do not increase the wrongdoers except in destruction" (Q 71:28).

The ḥadīth is also full of encouragement for people to pray for the dead and affirmation that the actions of the living do benefit the dead. It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When a person dies his opportunities to incur good deeds (and reward) come to an end, except for continuous charity (*ṣadaqa jāriya*), or knowledge from which people benefit, or a righteous child who prays for him" (*Muslim*, 4005).

It is also related by Abū Hurayra that a person said to the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ, "My father died and left behind property without making any bequests. Would he be relieved of the burden of his sins if I give charity on his behalf?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes" (*Muslim*, 4001). Also 'Ā'isha ﷺ reports that a man once asked the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ about his mother, who had died suddenly, without making a charitable bequest, but had she had the opportunity she would

have donated some money to charity. The man asked if he could give the charity on behalf of his mother. The Prophet replied, "Yes" (*Muslim*, 4002).

Very strong evidences have been provided to prove that both the Qur'an and the ḥadīth are clear in their encouragement to do good actions on behalf of the dead.

They have unanimously agreed that sacrificing an animal on the occasion of 'Īd al-Aḍḥā on behalf of the dead, charity, paying off debts without the prior request of the deceased, and praying for his forgiveness and mercy for him, are valid and permissible. However, they disagree regarding acts of worship that the deceased has not stipulated by will, but people have nevertheless done, such as reciting the Qur'an, performing ḥajj or 'umra, or donating money, and then praying for their reward to be donated to the deceased. There are two views regarding this:

The first view: The Ḥanafīs and Ḥanbalīs maintain that any righteous act of worship, be it voluntary or obligatory, can be donated to the deceased. This is regardless of whether or not the deceased stipulated it. Righteous actions are for example prayer, fasting, ḥajj, 'umra, recitation of the Qur'an, and *dhikr* (liturgical recitation of Allāh's names).¹

The second view: This group of jurists mainly consisting of Mālikīs and Shāfi'īs were faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, they found that the Qur'an and Sunna clearly mentioned the concept of reward being received by the dead from the actions of the living. On the other hand, there seemed to be a lack of clear cut evidence that *isāl al-thawāb* could be rolled out completely to include all acts of worship, such as doing *dhikr*, reading Qur'an, and the like. The jurists of this group sought to address this problem by analysing the various Qur'ānic texts and ḥadīth narrations. Drawing on the Qur'an and Sunna, this group of jurists produced a maxim to

¹ Kāsānī, 'Alā' al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Ma'sūd ibn Aḥmad, nd. *Badā'ī' al-Ṣanā'ī fī Tartīb al-Sharā'ī'*, Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Imām (henceforth cited as Kāsānī, *Badā'ī'*), 3:1288; Ibn 'Abidīn, *Ḥāshiyā*, 2:236; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, p. 187; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 2:567; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:147-148; Ibn al-Humām, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*, 2:308.

help them identify which acts of worship were suitable to donate to the dead and which actions were not. However, the Mālikīs and Shāfi'īs were divided in their conclusion of the maxim. The Mālikīs developed the principle of substitution and the Shāfi'īs developed the principle that the act of worship must be an independent act of worship. The Mālikīs maintain that donating the reward of actions that do not allow "substitution" (*niyāba*) is not permissible, while the reward of actions for which substitution is allowed maybe donated. What is meant by substitution is that a person may appoint another person to perform that act of worship if he or she is unable to perform it for themselves. The Mālikīs argue that the actions suitable for *isāl al-thawāb* are actions such as supplication (*du'ā'*), charity and sacrificing an animal on the occasion of 'Īd al-Aḍḥā. As for actions such as prayer (*ṣalāt*), fasting and the like, the popular view is that it is not valid, because substitution is not valid for those acts of worship. Hence, the reward can only be for the person who performed them. As for the recitation of Qur'an on behalf of the deceased, the reward of that is not transferable. This is regardless of whether the recitation was done at the time of death or after it. This is the popular view of the school. Imām Mālik considered the recitation of the Qur'an at the graveside to be disliked. However, among then Mālikīs, 'Alī al-Ajhūrī maintained that the reward of reciting the Qur'an can be donated to the deceased. Qarāfī, on the other hand, maintained that the blessings (*baraka*) of reciting Qur'an will reach the deceased, just as the blessings of a righteous person being buried by them will benefit them. He also argues that the reward reaching the dead should not be dismissed. It may be that the truth is that the reward does reach them. These are unseen matters. Ibn al-Ḥabīb points out that it is commendable to recite the Qur'an to the dying.

As for the Shāfi'ī jurists they maintain that the reward for reciting the Qur'an, or fasting and prayer (*ṣalāt*) cannot be donated to the deceased, unless it was an obligatory act of worship. However, some later Shāfi'ī scholars like 'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Aṣrūn considered donating the reward of reciting the Qur'an to be

valid and permissible. Nawawī on the other hand, regarded this view as weak.¹

The Evidences

The scholars who maintain the validity of donating the reward of good actions to the deceased argued on the basis of a tradition reported by Ḥajjāj ibn Dīnār, that a man came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and told him that he had dealt with his parents graciously when they were alive and now that they are dead how could he do good for them. The Prophet replied, "To pray for them with your prayer and to fast for them with your fast is doing good for them."² It is reported that Anas ibn Mālīk relates that he told the Prophet ﷺ, we give charity on behalf of our dead, perform *ḥajj* for them and pray for them. Does this reach them? The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes, and they are delighted with it, as you are delighted when you receive gifts."³ These traditions show that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ endorsed the concept of donating rewards to the deceased. This was done by virtue of the Prophet ﷺ encouraging Muslims to fast, pray and give charity for the dead. Scholars developed these ḥadīths into an axiom, which implies that the reward of good actions can be shared with the dead. This is strengthened by what many traditions record of the Prophet ﷺ telling heirs who came to him asking what they should do regarding unobserved fasts, *ḥajj* and vows of their deceased. The Prophet ﷺ told them that they should perform the respective act of worship on behalf of their dead.⁴

Another tradition, albeit weak (*ḍaʿīf*), relates that the Prophet

¹ Khurashī, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdillāh ibn ʿAlī, nd. *Al-Khurashī ʿAlā Mukhtaṣar Sidi Khalīl*, with *Sharḥ* by ʿAdawī, ʿAlī, Cairo: Amīriyya, 2:289; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Marwāhib al-Jalīl*, 2:228-238, 543-544; Nawawī, *Al-Majmūʿ*, 5:321, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:89-90, 11:84-85.

² There is a problem with the chain of narration and it has been difficult to trace which ḥadīth book it was recorded in. Shawkānī says it was in the *Dāraquṭnī* but I could not find it. See Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:89.

³ ʿAynī, Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad ibn Mūsā ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, 1972. *Umdat al-Qārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Ḥalabī (henceforth cited as ʿAynī, *Umdat al-Qārī*), 8:222.

⁴ This will be discussed further on.

ﷺ instructed Muslims to recite parts of the Qurʾān to the dying, "Yāsīn is the heart of the Qurʾān. Nothing will happen to a person who reads it wanting Allāh and the Abode of the Hereafter except that Allāh will forgive him. So recite Yāsīn upon the dying" (*Abū Dāwūd*, 3121). It is also transmitted that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, "Whoever passes by a cemetery and recites Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ eleven times and then donates the reward of it to the dead, the dead would receive the reward up to the number of people buried."¹ In like manner, it is related that when ʿĀʾisha's brother ʿAbd al-Raḥmān died, she observed spiritual retreat for him and emancipated a slave.² These ḥadīths fortify the permissibility of donating rewards to the dead. In an attempt to prove their view Kāsānī and Ibn Qudāma claim that there is consensus of opinion that donating the reward to the dead by way of prayer, fasting, reciting the Qurʾān and the like, is valid.³ In light of clear juristic dissension, it is difficult to agree that there is consensus, but it nevertheless proves that support for *iṣāl al-thawāb* was strong among scholars.

The main argument of the jurists with the opposing view is that spiritual acts of worship (*ʿibādāt*) are not subject to *ijtihād* (scholastic reasoning). Rather, it is restricted to clear and authentic text allowing it. Where the Qurʾān or authentic Sunna has allowed certain acts of spiritual worship to be donated to the dead it is regarded as permissible. Otherwise, it cannot be inferred from other texts through the process of *ijtihād*. Furthermore, it is authentically related that Ibn ʿAbbās decreed, "None should pray on behalf of another nor should one fast on behalf of another" (Nasāʾī, *Al-Kubrā*, 3126).⁴ This tradition proves that donating reward to the dead is not permissible in absolute terms, but only restricted to those acts sanctioned by the Qurʾān and Sunna.

¹ Qurṭubī, *Al-Tadhkira*, 1:137.

² Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 5:197.

³ Kāsānī, *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:1289; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 2:567; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qināʿ*, 2:147.

⁴ Nasāʾī, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shuʿayb ibn ʿAlī ibn Baḥr, nd. *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, Cairo: Dār al-Taʾṣīl, 3126; Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awtār*, 4:601.

Ibn Nujaym and Kāsānī both point out that the argument presented by the second group lacks strength. They assert that the tradition cited by them to oppose donating reward to the dead simply proves that a person cannot pray instead of another person while they are alive, but this does not mean that a person cannot donate the reward for the act of worship to another person posthumously.¹ That is to say, if a person were to fast instead of another person the obligation of fasting for that person is not lifted by virtue of the aforementioned tradition. But this does not mean that a person cannot ask Allāh to bestow the reward of that on the deceased. It is worth noting that doing *du'ā'* for the dead and giving charity on their behalf are regarded as valid by all scholars, regardless if the donor is related to the person or not.² If it is accepted that making *du'ā'* for the dead benefits them, then it is reasonable to assume that after recitation of the Qur'ān, asking Allāh to bestow the reward of it on the deceased also benefits them.³ The jurists of the first view have provided good evidence to support their claims for donating the rewards of good deeds (*iṣāl al-thawāb*) and this reaching the deceased as being valid and permissible.

How to Donate the Reward to the Dead

How and what should a person say when donating rewards to the dead? There are two points to be discussed. Firstly, does the person performing the action have to express in words his intention of *iṣāl al-thawāb*, such as saying, "O Allāh, give the reward of this to so-and-so," or is it enough to have the intention in the heart? Secondly, is intention necessary before performing the action or not? Ibn Nujaym and Ibn 'Ābidīn from the Ḥanafī school maintain that there is no difference between making the intention for the

¹ Kāsānī, *Badā'ī'*, 3:1288; Ibn Nujaym, Zayn al-Dīn, 1981, *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq Sharḥ Kanz al-Daqā'iq*, Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa (henceforth cited as Ibn Nujaym, *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq*), 3:63.

² Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awḥār*, 4:455.

³ Ibid.

deceased before performing the act of worship or after. A person may choose to do something for himself and then donate it to the deceased.¹ I have not found anything from the Ḥanafī school regarding expressing the intention of *iṣāl al-thawāb* orally or otherwise. Inferring from other opinions of Ḥanafī *fiqh* it can be understood that there is no need to make an oral intention. It will suffice to have the intention of donating the reward to the dead in the heart, although it maybe better to make intention orally.

There is nothing related from Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal or any other early Ḥanbalī jurists on this point. However, the later jurists have spoken about it. Some of them maintain that it is a condition that a person makes intention that the action they are about to perform is intended for the deceased. They also maintain that there is no condition that intention must be made orally. It is valid to make the intention either while doing the action, or in advance. This is the same as a person who gives money to the poor without an oral intention of *zakāt* but has the intention of *zakāt* in his heart while the poor person still has the money in his possession. Other Ḥanbalī jurists maintain that it is not a condition for a person to make intention of *iṣāl al-thawāb* prior to the good deed. A person is at liberty to either make intention before the act of worship or one may choose to do something for oneself and then donate it to the deceased. However, they do regard it as commendable to make the intention. This is the opinion of Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā and Bahūtī.²

Gatherings for *Fātiḥa* (Khatm) and Commemorating Death Anniversaries

It is the practice in some Muslim communities and cultures to commemorate the death of their loved ones. This remembrance ceremony sometimes takes place after ten days or forty days of death or annually. The aim of such gatherings is to practise *iṣāl al-thawāb*,

¹ Ibn Nujaym, *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq*, 3:63; Ibn 'Ābidīn, *Ḥāshiya*, 1:666, 2:236.

² Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:148; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, pp. 212–213, 226–227.

usually consisting of reciting the Qur'ān and other acts of worship. An example of this can be seen in a prevalent practice of some Muslims of the Indo-Pak, who have a special day when members of the family or local mosque *imāms* would attend a gathering to complete the recitation of the entire Qur'ān and subsequently request *iṣāl al-thawāb*. This type of practice is controversial and scholars have questioned its validity. Although the validity of *iṣāl al-thawāb* is established, what makes commemorating death anniversaries contentious concerns a number of factors. The three most prominent objections are:

1. This was never practised by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ or any of his Companions.
2. Having a fixed date or period such as annually or after forty days of death.
3. Making Fātiḥa gatherings or death anniversaries a ritual institution in Islam.

The proponents of Fātiḥa gatherings or death anniversaries may have good arguments to support their practice and there may be some merit in their claim. However, I believe that one of the primary objections may rest in the congregation for these events and in observing a fixed number of days. That is to say, if individual members of the family were to avoid pre-stipulated dates and recite the Qur'ān, partly or completely, and then request *iṣāl al-thawāb*, there would be less to argue against it; instead it becomes an issue of *iṣāl al-thawāb*. What is better to do and is established by authentic Islamic traditions to help the dead is to spend the money either feeding the poor or helping good charitable causes. This type of action serves to help the deceased more than debatable or contentious actions do.

ATONEMENTS, DEBTS & EXPIATIONS

The Rights of the Deceased

The deceased must be honoured at all times. One of the ways they are honoured is by observing their rights. There are two sets of rights: their immediate rights and their post-burial rights. Regarding their immediate rights, it is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayra ؓ who heard the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ saying, "There are five rights a Muslim has over a Muslim:

1. To return a *salām*,
2. To visit the sick,
3. To follow the funeral procession,
4. To accept an invitation,
5. To reply back to a person who has sneezed (and has said, 'All praise is due to Allāh' (*Bukhārī*, 1240).

Their rights after death include bathing the body and shrouding it. Umm 'Atiyya al-Anṣāriyya ؓ narrates, "Allāh's Messenger ﷺ came to us when his daughter died and said, "Wash her three or five times or more, as you see fit, with water and *sidr* (lote-tree leaves), and then apply camphor, or some camphor at the end. When you finish, notify me." Accordingly, when we finished we informed the Prophet ﷺ and he gave us his lower-wrap and told us to shroud the dead body in it (*Bukhārī*, 1253).

Finally, sending the deceased from this world is completed by prayer and burial.

The following section deals with the post-burial rights. Unlike the immediate rights of the deceased, which are agreed upon by Muslim scholars, the post-burial rights are subject to juristic dissension.

After bathing and shrouding the body a prayer is made for the

usually consisting of reciting the Qur'ān and other acts of worship. An example of this can be seen in a prevalent practice of some Muslims of the Indo-Pak, who have a special day when members of the family or local mosque *imāms* would attend a gathering to complete the recitation of the entire Qur'ān and subsequently request *iṣāl al-thawāb*. This type of practice is controversial and scholars have questioned its validity. Although the validity of *iṣāl al-thawāb* is established, what makes commemorating death anniversaries contentious concerns a number of factors. The three most prominent objections are:

1. This was never practised by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ or any of his Companions.
2. Having a fixed date or period such as annually or after forty days of death.
3. Making Fātiḥa gatherings or death anniversaries a ritual institution in Islam.

The proponents of Fātiḥa gatherings or death anniversaries may have good arguments to support their practice and there may be some merit in their claim. However, I believe that one of the primary objections may rest in the congregation for these events and in observing a fixed number of days. That is to say, if individual members of the family were to avoid pre-stipulated dates and recite the Qur'ān, partly or completely, and then request *iṣāl al-thawāb*, there would be less to argue against it; instead it becomes an issue of *iṣāl al-thawāb*. What is better to do and is established by authentic Islamic traditions to help the dead is to spend the money either feeding the poor or helping good charitable causes. This type of action serves to help the deceased more than debatable or contentious actions do.

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deceased, which consists of supplication for peace, forgiveness and asking Allāh to grant the deceased the ultimate reward of heaven. After prayer is made the deceased is buried. It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever attends the funeral procession staying till he offers the funeral prayer will get a reward equal to one *qirāt*, and whoever accompanies it to the burial, will get a reward equal to two *qirāt*." The Prophet ﷺ was asked, "What are *qirāt*?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Like two huge mountains" (*Bukhārī*, 1325).

Paying for the Funeral and Settling Debts

Washing, shrouding, praying, and burying the dead are the first and foremost tasks to be carried out after a person has died. There is no disagreement among Muslim scholars regarding this communal obligation.¹ The expense incurred for this is taken from the estate of the deceased. The payment of any debts that are outstanding against the deceased is the next right to be observed. For a Muslim, debt can be understood in two ways: It can be a "right of Allāh," which is defined as any act of worship Allāh has demanded from human-kind, such as *zakāt*, *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*, atonements (*kaffārāt*), vows, and the like. The other type of debt is that owing to another human being such as borrowed money, stolen money, property confiscated by force, and the like. This section will look into the repayments of these debts and which debts take priority over others when the estate is insufficient to cover all of them.

The Debt that is Due to Allāh

The debts that are the right of Allāh are:

- *zakāt*,
- *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*,
- atonement for homicide,
- atonement for breaking an oath,

¹ Zuhayli, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, 2:1484, 1498, 1508, 1547.

- atonement for intentionally having sexual intercourse during the month of Ramaḍān whilst fasting,
- atonement for breaking a fast,
- atonement for hunting in the state of *iḥrām*,
- land tax (*kharāj*),
- charity given on account of a vow.

In terms of repayment, these debts can be divided into two groups:

1. the debt of *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*,
2. all other types of debt.

The Definition of *Zakāt* and *Ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*

Zakāt has many literal meanings. It can mean growth, increase, purification and praise.¹ In the language of the law, *zakāt* is defined as a particular amount of property that must be paid to certain classes of eligible recipients.² *Zakāt* is one of the pillars of Islam and it is a very important act of worship. In the Qur'ān whenever Allāh mentions establishing prayer, He mentions with it paying *zakāt*. The obligation of annually rendering *zakāt* is established by the consensus of Muslim scholars.³ *Zakāt* is obligatory upon a Muslim who is sane, mature (*bāligh*) and possesses the minimum measure of wealth that constitutes the *niṣāb*.⁴ There are two types of *zakāt*: *zakāt* that is payable on money, property, merchandise, livestock, crops and the like; and *zakāt* that is payable upon head counts in a family. This latter is called *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*. A person

¹ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 3:477; Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*, 2:207.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.; Ibn Rushd, Abū Walīd Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, 1996. *Bidāyat al-Mujtabā wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid*, English translation by Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee, UK: Garnet Publishers, Reviewed by Mohammad Abdul Rauf (henceforth cited as Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-Mujtabā*), 1:283.

⁴ Readers should refer to books on *zakāt* to work out the amount as well as the preconditions of paying *zakāt*. Broadly speaking *niṣāb* is to own 84.7 grams of gold or 592.9 grams of silver or money equal to that amount. (Keller, *Reliance of the Traveller*, p. 257).

obliged to pay *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* must give approximately 2.03 litres of the main staple food of the region in which *zakāt* is given (or its equivalent in money according to the Ḥanafī school).¹ This *zakāt* is payable during the month of Ramaḍān. There is a difference of opinion among the four schools of thought regarding the conditions of a person who has to pay *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*.² In like manner, there is difference of opinion among Muslim jurists regarding the legal ruling of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*. The vast majority of the scholars maintain that *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is obligatory. This opinion is maintained by the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence. ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar narrates that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ made the payment of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* of one *ṣā‘* of dates or one *ṣā‘* of barley as *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* compulsory on every Muslim, slave or free, male or female, young or old; and he ordered that it be paid before the people went out to offer ‘Īd prayer (*Bukhārī*, 1503).⁴ This ḥadīth clearly states that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ made the payment of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* compulsory (*fard*). Furthermore, Allāh commands the faithful in the Qur’ān to render *zakāt*, “and establish your prayers and pay your *zakāt*.”⁵ This verse outlines the obligation of paying *zakāt* without specifying any particular type of *zakāt*. Since *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is a type of *zakāt*, it therefore follows that the obligation of paying *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* comes under the general ruling of the above Qur’ānic precept.

Scholars who do not agree that *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is obligatory can

¹ Marghīnānī, ‘Alī ibn Abī Bakr, nd. *Al-Hidāya*, Deoband: Ashrafi Book Depot, 1:210.

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⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1503; Sijistānī, Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ash’ath ibn Ishāq, 1999. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (in the *Marwū‘at al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf*), Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh (henceforth cited as *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*), 1611; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 676; Ibn Māja, Abū ‘Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Qazwīnī, 1999. *Sunan Ibn Māja*, (in the *Marwū‘at al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf*), Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, edited by Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Āl al-Shaykh (henceforth cited as *Ibn Māja*, *Sunan Ibn Māja*), 1826.

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be divided into two groups. First, a less popular view is maintained by some later Mālikī and Shāfi‘ī jurists that *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is a *sunna*. To prove their point the scholars of this group argue using the same prophetic tradition as the first group. However, unlike the first group, they maintain that the term *fard* (compulsory) employed in the ḥadīth means to “appraise.” Hence, the translation of the ḥadīth would read as

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used to command Muslims to pay *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* prior to the law of *zakāt*. Once the law of *zakāt* was revealed the Prophet ﷺ no longer demanded the payment of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*. This proves that the *zakāt* replaced *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*.

The jurists holding the opinion that *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is a *sunna* have been criticised by many scholars for interpreting the word *farāḍa* to mean appraise. Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd, for instance, points out that although the literal meaning of *farāḍa* means to appraise, however, in a legal context it means compulsory, and therefore interpreting *farāḍa* to mean compulsory is more contextually appropriate.¹ In like manner, the great Ḥanafī jurist Kamāl ibn al-Humām points out that, interpreting words according to their proper legal meanings when spoken by the Lawgiver is established so long as there is no evidence to indicate otherwise.² Ibn Rushd, the grandfather, argues that it is not correct to interpret the meaning of *farāḍa* to mean appraise. This is because the ḥadīth mentions "*farāḍa zakāt al-fiṭr ʿala l-nās*" (the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ made the payment of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* compulsory). The preposition *ʿala* denotes obligation and compulsion (in the Law).³

The opinion suggesting the cancellation of the payment of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* has no real merits. This is because the tradition cited in support of their opinion is very weak. Ibn Ḥajar points out that there is a narrator who is unknown in this tradition. This has rendered the tradition weak and unsuitable to establish the cancellation of the law of *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*.⁴ Furthermore, according to the opinion of Ibn al-Mundhir, the obligation of paying *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is established by

¹ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:543.

² Ibid.

³ Ibn Rushd, Abū Walīd Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, 1988. *Al-Muqaddimāt al-Mumabhidāt li Bayān mā Iqṭaḍathu Rusūm al-Mudawwana min al-Aḥkām al-Sharʿiyyāt wa al-Taḥṣilāt al-Muḥkamāt li Ummahāt Masāʾilihā al-Mushkilāt*, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī (henceforth cited as Ibn Rushd, *Al-Muqaddimāt*), 1:333.

⁴ ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Ḥajar, 1989. *Fath al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, edited by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn ʿAbdillāh ibn Bāz and ḥadīths numbered by Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī (henceforth cited as Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-Bārī*), 3:469.

consensus (*ijmāʿ*).¹ Therefore, the opinion of Abū Bakr ibn Kaysān al-Aṣamm and Ibrāhīm ibn ʿUlayya have contradicted consensus and must be disregarded. The opinion of the majority of scholars that *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is a mandatory charitable payment is supported by very strong evidence. This is because it conforms to prophetic traditions and is concordant with scholarly consensus.

The Payment of *Zakāt* and *Ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* from the Estate of the Deceased

Muslim jurists have differed regarding a person who has died prior to rendering *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* into two groups:

The first group: According to the Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī schools the obligation of paying *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* does not cease upon the death of a person. Therefore, the payment of *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* must be taken from the estate even if the deceased did not stipulate it by will. This opinion is also supported by ʿAṭāʾ, Zuhri, Qatāda, Ibn al-Mundhir, Abū Thawr, and others.²

The second group: The Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs maintain that once a person dies, having neglected to pay his *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*, the obligation ceases, unless he has stipulated that it should be paid from his estate. If a person has made a stipulation to that effect then *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is rendered, but only up to one-third of the estate. If the payment exceeds one-third the heirs are not legally obliged to pay the excess, and the same is true if no bequest was made to pay the *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*, but the heirs may wish to do so voluntarily.³ However, if a person died less than a year after the obligation of *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* became due, then the payment must be made from his estate.⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Muḥy al-Dīn ibn Sharaf, nd. *Al-Majmūʿ Sharḥ al-Mubaddab*, Cairo: Al-Taḍāmūn al-Akhawī, edited by Muḥammad Najīb al-Muṭī, 5:309; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:518.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibn ʿĀbidīn. *Ḥāshiyā*, 2:332-334; Ibn al-ʿArabī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd-

The jurists who maintain that the obligation of paying *zakaat* does not cease upon the death of a person, base their grounds of the Qur'anic command regarding inheritance that the estate be divided, "after honouring bequests made or paying off debts" (4:11). This verse clearly stipulates that any entitlements to the estate are considered after bequests are honoured and debts have been paid off. The payment of debt supersedes the entitlement of the heirs. *Zakaat* is the right of Allāh and a person is indebted to Allāh for it as a debt if it is not paid off on time. This debt must be paid off before the estate is divided, because it comes under the general Qur'anic command of settling debts. To further strengthen their argument, the proponents of this opinion cite the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbas ra that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh! My mother has died and still owes one month of fasting, should I make it up for her?" The Prophet replied, "If your mother had been alive would you have paid that off on her behalf?" The man replied affirmatively. The Prophet told him, "The debt of Allāh has more right of being settled" (*Muslim*, 3694). Here the Prophet ﷺ has made it clear that any debt owing to Allāh must be paid off the same as any debt that is owed to people.¹

The advocates of the opinion that after death the obligation of paying *zakaat* ceases unless stipulated for by will, argue that *zakaat* is an act of worship. For an act of worship to be valid requires intention to prove that it was done out of choice. Where choice and intention are not found an act of worship cannot materialise.² Therefore, it is inconceivable that a dead person who has made no prior stipulation has made intention to execute an act of worship. His procrastination in paying *zakaat* makes him sinful and his transition from this life to the hereafter makes him no longer subject to the law.

illah, nd. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1:446.

¹ Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 5:309; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:528.

² Ibn al-Humām, *Sharḥ Fath al-Qadīr*, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1:100.

The jurists who maintain that the obligation of paying *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* does not cease upon the death of a person, argue on the grounds of the Qur'ānic command regarding bequests. Allāh commands the Muslims regarding inheritance that the estate must be divided, "after honouring bequests made or paying off debts" (Q 4:11). This verse clearly stipulates that any entitlements to the estate are considered after bequests are honoured and after debts have been paid off. The payment of debt supersedes the entitlement of the heirs. *Zakāt* is the right of Allāh and a person remains accountable for it as a debt if it is not paid off on time. This debt owing to Allāh must be paid off before the estate is divided, because it comes under the general Qur'ānic command of settling debts. To further strengthen their argument, the proponents of this opinion refer to the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh! My mother has died and still owes one month of fasting, should I make it up for her?" The Prophet replied, "If your mother had a debt would you have paid that off on her behalf?" The man replied in the affirmative. The Prophet told him, "The debt of Allāh has more right of being settled" (*Muslim*, 3694). Here the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ has made it clear that any debt owing to Allāh must be paid off, the same as any debt that is owed to people.¹

The advocates of the opinion that after death the obligation of paying *zakāt* ceases unless stipulated for by will, argue that *zakāt* is an act of worship. For an act of worship to be valid requires intention to prove that it was done out of choice. Where choice and intention are not found an act of worship cannot materialise.² Therefore, it is inconceivable that a dead person who has made no prior stipulation has made intention to execute an act of worship. His procrastination in paying *zakāt* makes him sinful and his transition from this life to the hereafter makes him no longer subject to the law.

illāh, nd. *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1:446.

¹ Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 5:309; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:518.

² Ibn al-Humām, *Sharḥ Faṭḥ al-Qadīr*, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2:157.

The Shāfi'is and Ḥanbalīs argue that the debt of *zakāt* is a debt like any other debt that is owed to people if not greater. The ḥadīth is clear that "the debt to Allāh has most right of being settled" and many other traditions equally convey the same meaning. The Qur'ān is clear in that debts should be settled before the estate is divided, regardless of whether or not the deceased has included this in his will. *Zakāt*, although an act of worship, is nevertheless a financial matter that relates to the wealth of the deceased. *Zakāt* is a right of Allāh and a debt that is owed to Him and if it is not paid during the lifetime of the departed it should be treated like any other debt. The Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs criticise paying *zakāt* and *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* on behalf of the deceased by pointing out that the analogy of *zakāt* with debt is an incompatible analogy (*qiyās ma'a l-fāriq*). This is because in the worship of Allāh it is the action itself that is taken into consideration rather than the object being offered. It is the act of paying *zakāt* that constitutes the worship, as opposed to the money that is given. This is contrary to paying off debts owed to people, because in paying off debts the objective is not the action but the return of the money that is owed.

The Payment of Other Types of Debt

The other types of debt considered to be due to Allāh are as follows:

- atonement for homicide,
- atonement for breaking an oath,
- atonement for intentionally having sexual intercourse during the month of Ramaḍān whilst fasting,
- atonement for breaking a fast,
- atonement for hunting in the state of *iḥrām*,
- land tax (*kharāj* and *'ushr*),
- charity made on account of a vow.

Atonement for Homicide

Atonement for homicide is mandatory on account of murder or manslaughter. A person guilty of this offence must make atonement by freeing a slave, and if one cannot, then to fast two months consecutively. The instructions for this can be found in the Qur'an. Allāh says:

And never is it for a believer to kill a believer except by mistake. And whoever kills a believer by mistake then freeing of a believing slave and a compensation payment presented to his family unless they forgo it out of charity. But if he was from a people at war with you and he was a believer then the freeing of a believing slave; and if he was from a people with whom you have a treaty then the compensation payment presented to his family and the freeing of a believing slave. And whoever does not find a slave must fast for two months consecutively (Q 4:92).

Atonement for Breaking an Oath

An oath is a solemn statement to do or refrain from something, or to swear that something is true, such that if things turn out to be otherwise, the person making the oath must make expiation.¹ The atonement for breaking an oath is to feed ten paupers or clothe them or free a slave, and if that is not possible, then to fast three days. Allāh says in the Qur'an, "Allāh will not impose blame on you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for breaking what you intended of oaths. So its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your own families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot afford it, then fast for three days. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. . ." (Q 5:89).

¹ Keller, *Reliance*, p. 620.

Atonement for Intentionally Having Sexual Intercourse during the Month of Ramaḍān While Fasting

It is agreed by the consensus of Muslim jurists that intentionally having sexual intercourse¹ during the month of Ramaḍān whilst fasting occasions the obligation of expiation. The expiation for intentionally having sexual intercourse during the month of Ramaḍān whilst fasting is to free a slave, if that is not possible then to fast two months consecutively, and if that is not possible then feed sixty paupers. The evidence for this is found in the ḥadīth. It is related that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "I am destroyed O Messenger of Allāh!" The Prophet enquired what had caused him to be destroyed. The man replied that he had had sexual intercourse with his wife whilst fasting [in Ramaḍān]. The Prophet asked him, "Can you free a slave?" He replied, "No." The Prophet asked him, "Can you fast for two months uninterruptedly?" He replied, "No." The Prophet asked him, "Can you afford to feed sixty paupers? . . ." (Bukhārī, 1936).

Atonement for Breaking a Fast

In the language of the law the term used for the atonement of breaking a fast is *fidya*. *Fidya* is mandatory for every day of fasting that is omitted on account of old age, ailment for which there is no hope of recovery, or a person who dies and has broken a fast in the month of Ramaḍān that he had to make up for (*qada*). The amount of *fidya* and other details differs from school to school. According to the Ḥanafīs the expiation is 2.03 litres of dates or barley or 1.03 litres of wheat for every fast missed. According to the Mālikīs the expiation is 0.51 litres of any foodstuff. The Shāfi'īs also agree with this but stipulate that the foodstuff must be the staple of that area. The Ḥanbalīs on the other hand maintain that expiation is feeding the poor to an adequate amount.

¹ Sexual intercourse is defined as copulation either vaginally or anally.

Charity Made on Account of a Vow

If a person vows to make a monetary donation to charity for any reason, then honouring this vow is obligatory.

The Payment of Atonement from the Estate of the Deceased

There is a difference of opinion regarding payments of atonement from the estate of the deceased. According to the Shāfiʿī school, which is also the apparent position of the Ḥanbali school, such payments must be made from the estate prior to dividing the estate for inheritance, regardless of whether or not the deceased made provision for it in the will.¹ The opposing opinion to this is that of the Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs. They maintain that taxes or expiations are not paid from the estate of the deceased unless the deceased has stipulated it in the will. If a stipulation is made to pay off any expiation or taxes, the heirs are only obliged to pay whatever does not exceed one-third of the estate. If the amount exceeds one-third the heirs, at their discretion, may either pay it or not.²

The evidences and arguments used by both schools are more or less the same as the ones used regarding the issue of paying *zakaat* and *sadaqat al-fiṭr* out of the estate of the deceased. Different ḥadīths are used in the light of reinforcing what the Prophet ﷺ said, to wit, that the debt due to Allāh has more right of being paid. For instance, it is narrated that ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās said that a woman from the tribe of Juhayna came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “My mother had vowed to perform *hajj* but she died before performing it. Should I make it up for her?” The Prophet replied, “If your mother had a debt would you have paid that off on her behalf?” The Prophet then

¹ Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 11:84–96; *Al-Majmūʿ*, 6:232; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 2:683, 3:81.

² Ibn ʿAbidīn, *Hāshiyah*, 2:119; Dasūqī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, nd. *Hāshiyat al-Dasūqī ʿalā ʾl-Sharḥ al-Kabīr*, Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabīyya, commentary by Muḥammad ʿAlish (henceforth cited as Dasūqī, *Hāshiyat al-Dasūqī*), 2:186.

said, “Pay the debt of Allāh, the debt of Allāh has most right of being settled” (*Bukhārī*, 1852). Similar to previously cited ḥadīths this tradition also strikes the analogy whereby debts owed to people must be paid off just as the debt that is owed to Allāh because it is more worthy of being settled.

There are great merits in the arguments of both groups of jurists. While one group of jurists focuses on taking the literal meaning of the prophetic tradition, to wit, any debt owing to Allāh must be paid off in the same way as debts owed to people; the other group of scholars have argued rationally that acts of worshipping Allāh are not valid without intention. One cannot simply ignore the strength and the *raison d'être* of the Ḥanafī and Mālikī arguments; however much one admires the Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbali opinions.

Payments of Debt Owed to People

Death does not announce its arrival in advance. However, for the few fortunate ones, Allāh through His infinite mercy does send signs indicating that death is approaching. Terminal illness and very old age are obvious signs, while grey hair and poor health are more subtle signs. Regardless of the status of our health and wealth, life still goes on amid the ups and downs of the natural pattern of this world. We deal with the rough and the smooth, and all the other aspects of human life arranged by Allāh's design to test mankind to ascertain our worthiness as faithful to God Most High. A part of human life is the interdependency we share with others. Human subsistence and survival requires mutual cooperation; this is a natural part of life. Borrowing money is a good example of human interdependency. Very few people have the luxury of living their lives free from debt. It is most likely that we all might, at some point in our lives, be in debt. Some people are fortunate enough to pay back their debts before they die, while others do not get this opportunity. If a person dies before he is able to settle his debts, the responsibility rests on his heirs to repay these debts from his estate prior to the division of his property. There is no disagreement

among Muslim jurists regarding this obligation. The obligation to pay debts is enshrined in the Qur'ān in clear-cut terms. Allāh says, "And after honouring bequests made or paying off debt" (Q 4:11). In like manner, the prophetic traditions are full of references to the importance and the priority given to paying off the debts of the deceased. It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, my mother has died and not observed one month of fasting, should I make it up for her?" The Prophet replied, "If your mother had a debt would you have paid that off on her behalf?" The man replied in the affirmative. The Prophet told him, "The debt owed to Allāh has more right of being settled" (*Muslim*, 3694). Ibn 'Abbās also narrates that a woman from the tribe of Juhayna came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "My mother had vowed to perform *hajj* but she died before performing it. Should I make it up for her?" The Prophet replied, "If your mother had a debt would you have paid that off on her behalf?" The Prophet then said, "Pay the debt of Allāh, the debt owed to Allāh has more right of being settled" (*Bukhārī*, 1852).

The seriousness of not paying debts cannot be shown more clearly than in the following ḥadīth where the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ refused to pray the funeral of a person who died and had only a two dinar debt. It is related on the authority of Jābir that a man died so we bathed him and shrouded him. Then we came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said, "Will you pray [the funeral prayer] over him?" The Prophet took a step and then asked, "Does he have any unpaid debt?" We said, "Two dinars." The Prophet left (refusing to pray over him). Abū Qatāda took the responsibility to pay off the two dinars. Once it was paid off the Prophet was informed and accordingly attended and led the prayer over the deceased.¹

The deceased's debt must be paid off from his estate regardless of whether or not he had previously stipulated it in his will. If the debt is equal to the entire estate then priority is given to paying

¹ Haythamī, 'Alī ibn Abī Bakr, nd. *Majmū' al-Zawā'id*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Qudsi, 3:39.

off the debt and the heirs are left with nothing. If the debt is more than his estate then his heirs, at their own discretion, may pay off the surplus amount. If the heirs pay off the debt on behalf of the deceased, he is absolved of his responsibility for the debt.¹ In a situation where the debt is greater than the estate, the heirs should seriously consider paying off any remaining debts if that is within their collective means. Paying of any outstanding debts will provide salvation from creditors on the Day of Judgement and the act of paying off debts will be counted as a charitable deed for the heirs.

Priority of Paying Debts owing to Allāh and Debts due to People

Muslim jurists are unanimous that if a person dies and leaves behind debts which consist of a combination of debts owed to Allāh and debts owed to people, then these debts must be paid off, even if it requires the entire estate to do so. However, the point of disagreement between them is when the estate is not sufficient to pay off both kinds of debt. Either the amount is sufficient to pay the debts owing to Allāh or His creation. The juristic debate focuses on which debts should take priority for payment. It should be pointed out that this disagreement is only among those jurists who maintain the obligation of paying debts owing to Allāh. As previously mentioned it was the Shāfi'is and Ḥanbalis who maintained the obligation of paying off debts owing to Allāh; while the Ḥanafis and the Mālikīs maintained that there is no obligation to pay off debts owing to Allāh unless the deceased provides for it in his will. If this is the case then the heirs must honour it, but only up to one-third of the estate. Hence, the disagreement as to which debts should take priority becomes relevant when the estate does not suffice to cover both categories of debt. The Ḥanafis and the Mālikīs enter into this debate when the bequest made by the deceased is a combination

¹ Ibn 'Ābidīn, *Hāshiyā*, 2:118; Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:84; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 7:109-110; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 9:31.

of bequests made to paying off debts owing to Allāh and general bequests made in favour of other beneficiaries. I will proceed, firstly, by addressing the Shāfi'i and Ḥanbalī debate.

The Shāfi'i and Ḥanbalī Position

If a person dies and leaves behind combined debts owing to Allāh and to people, then these debts must be paid off. The Shāfi'i and Ḥanbalī jurists are at odds regarding the issue of priority as to which of the two classes of debt should be paid off first if the estate is not sufficient to settle both. There are three opinions regarding this:

Group one: This group of scholars maintains that if the estate is not enough to settle both sets of debt, then priority must be given to paying the debts owing to Allāh first and any remainder used to pay off other debts. This is the position of the Shāfi'i school.¹ The evidence to support this opinion is found in the prophetic traditions. It is recorded on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās ؓ, that a man came to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, my mother has died and not observed one month of fasting, should I make it up for her? The Prophet replied, "If your mother had a debt would you have paid that off on her behalf?" The man replied in the affirmative. The Prophet told him, "The debt of Allāh has more right to be settled" (*Muslim*, 3694). In like manner, other prophetic traditions previously mentioned all convey the message that the debt due to Allāh is "more" worthy of being settled. The ḥadīth seems to indicate that debts owing to Allāh take priority over other debts because the Prophet ﷺ said that a debt owing to Allāh "has more right to be settled." To further strengthen this argument the proponents of this view point out that 'Ikrima narrates that a woman came to 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās and told him that her mother was due to perform *ḥajj* but died before doing so, and asked him whether she should perform it on her behalf. Ibn 'Abbās asked her if her mother had any debts. She replied in the affirmative. Ibn 'Abbās enquired what she did about the debt. The woman told him

¹ Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:231-232, 7:110.

that she had paid it off. Ibn 'Abbās told her, "Allāh is your foremost creditor, perform *ḥajj* on your mother's behalf."¹

Group two: Contrary to the first group, this group of jurists maintains that debts owing to people take priority over debts owing to Allāh. This is one of the opinions maintained by Imām Shāfi'i and favoured by some Ḥanbalī jurists.² The jurists of this opinion attempt to justify their view by arguing that money is a human necessity and an integral part of human life. When it is given out and lost it causes great harm to a person. Not only is the harm felt financially but it also creates ill feeling between people. This is unacceptable to Allāh, who is self-sufficient and beyond the need or desire for worship or money. It is for this reason that if a person has committed the crime of murder and apostasy at the same time, he is punished for murder rather than apostasy.

Group three: The third opinion attempts to find a middle way. They maintain that if the estate is not enough to pay off both debts then it is split between the two. This position is favoured by the Ḥanbalī jurists and is one of the opinions of Shāfi'i.³ The evidence for this opinion is the tradition narrated by Ibn 'Abbās ؓ, that a man came to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh, my mother has died and not observed one month of fasting, should I make it up for her?" The Prophet replied, "If your mother had a debt would you have paid that off on her behalf?" The man replied in the affirmative. The Prophet told him, "The debt to Allāh has more right to be settled" (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3694). Here the Prophet ﷺ has indicated a certain degree of equality between debts owing to people and debts owed to Allāh. This can be understood from the words, "If your mother had a debt would you have paid that

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1852; Ibn Ḥazm, Abū Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa'īd, nd. *Al-Muḥallā bi'l-Āthār*, Beirut: Dār al-Ittiḥād al-'Arabī, edited by 'Abd al-Gaffār Sulaymān al-Bandārī (henceforth cited as Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*), 7:63.

² Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 8:26; Shirbinī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:411; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:244.

³ Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:231-232, 7:110; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:244.

off on her behalf?" The ḥadīth indicates that there is an element of comparability between the right of Allāh and the right of creation regarding debts. The Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ told the petitioner that just as the debt due to creation should be settled, the debt owed to the Creator should equally be paid off. This is because the obligation to pay debts applies equally in all cases; therefore, debts are paid off pro rata in proportion to the amount owed. For example, let us take the case of an estate worth £10,000 with debts owed to people amounting to £7,000 and debts owed to Allāh amounting to £4,000. The estate will be divided into two portions; a 64% share (£6363.64) to service the debts owed to people and a 36% share (£3636.36) to service the debts owing to Allāh.

Allāh is not in need of our worship nor is He in need of our money. If a person has worshipped Allāh, he will get his reward. Allāh is Most Forgiving and He loves to forgive. On the other hand, people need money and it is a vital aspect of our lives. People usually borrow money from other people that they know such as friends and family members. In most cases it is extremely difficult for a person to write off a debt worth hundreds of pounds, let alone thousands. By not paying off such debts, it will not only cause financial hardship for the creditor but it will also cause ill feelings and animosity between Muslims. In order to avoid causing harm and creating splits between friends and family, the option of paying off debts owed to people should be seriously considered by the heirs. If there is debt due to Allāh then the heirs can pray to Allāh to forgive the deceased. The Prophet ﷺ refusing to pray over a person because he had a debt of only a few dinars should serve as a stark warning. The matter of paying monetary debts owing to other people is an extremely serious one, so-much-so that Allāh has enshrined it as law that debts must be paid off before the division of the estate: "After bequests that were made have been honoured and debts have been settled" (Q4:11).

The prophetic traditions talking about settling debts due to Allāh are there to show the importance of this debt and not its priority. It is for this reason that people coming to the Prophet ﷺ all said that they have or would have settled the debt owed to people.

The Ḥanafī and the Mālikī Position

The Ḥanafīs and the Mālikīs maintain that when a bequest consists of a combination of paying off debts due to Allāh and general bequests in favour of various beneficiaries, then these are honoured up to one-third of the estate. However, if the bequest is more than one-third then the Ḥanafī and Mālikī jurists differ regarding some of the details of which takes priority.

The Ḥanafī View

The Ḥanafī jurists maintain that if all the debts (or "bequests" as they put it) are owed to Allāh, then if the acts of worship are of one category, that is to say, *fard*, *wājib* or *nafl* actions, then the bequest is honoured. Therefore, if a person bequeathed that his *ḥajj* should be done first, then his *zakāt*, and then his fast, then that order is observed to the amount of one-third of the estate. It is recorded that Abū Yūsuf maintained that *ḥajj* should take priority over others acts, while Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī held the payment of *zakāt* to take priority, arguing that in the case of *ḥajj* the right belongs exclusively to Allāh, while in the case of *zakāt* the right belongs to two; namely, Allāh and the recipients of *zakāt*. If the actions are a combination of *ḥajj* and *zakāt* and atonements, then *ḥajj* and *zakāt* will take priority over the atonements. This is because *ḥajj* and *zakāt* are inherently mandatory actions, while atonement becomes mandatory due to the mistake of the person. In short, priority is given to acts of worship that are strongly established in Islamic law over acts of worship that are not. For instance, in a case where *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* and *uḍḥiyya* (sacrificing an animal at the time of 'Īd) remain as debts, then priority would go to *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* because although both are obligatory *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr* is more rigorously well established than *uḍḥiyya*. However, if the actions are of different categories, that is to say, some actions are *fard*, and some *wājib* and some *nafl* then priority is given to the *fard*, then to the *wājib*, and then to the *nafl*. However, if the bequests are a combination of debts owing to Allāh and general bequests made to people, then it is divided among them. That is to say, if a person

were to bequeath that his *hajj*, *zakāt*, atonements and some money for his friend are to be given from his wealth, then one-third of the property will be allocated for that. The one-third will be divided into four parts; three parts will be dedicated to settlement of the debts owed to Allāh, and the fourth part will be given to his friend.¹

The Mālikī View

The Mālikī position is slightly complicated. Certain parts of it have no relevance to our lives in modern times such as the manumission of slaves, and therefore, I have omitted it from the list. To present it as simply as possible, the Mālikīs maintain that priority is given to any of the following:

- outstanding dowry (*mahr*),
- then *zakāt* upon livestock and crops,
- then *ṣadaqat al-fiṭr*,
- then atonements for murder,
- then breaking a vow,
- then atonement for intentionally breaking a fast during Ramaḍān, and
- then *hajj*.²

Ibn Ḥazm criticizes this approach saying that it is arbitrary and lacks any evidence or logical reason for giving priority to certain elements over others.³ There is some weight in Ibn Ḥazm's observations. The complete list of priorities appears confusing.

It is vital to note that the most important element of paying off debts is the intention to send the deceased off on his journey to the hereafter without the cloud of financial obligation resting over him. According to this debate the heirs are duty bound to pay the debts of the deceased only when he has bequeathed its payment from his estate. The departed are powerless to correct their actions. The

¹ Kāsānī, *Bada'i*, 10:4626-4934.

² Ibn Rushd, *Al-Muqaddimāt*, 1:123-125.

³ Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 10:466.

only help they can receive is from their heirs. Our blood ties make it our responsibility to help our departed loved ones. This moral responsibility should be taken into consideration. If it is within the physical and financial means of the heirs to pay off the debts, then that is one of the best acts they could do for the deceased.

Making up for Missed Prayers on Behalf of the Deceased and Paying Expiation (*Fidya*)

The prayer, or *ṣalāt*, is one of the most superlative acts of worshipping Allāh. Although praying does not become obligatory before puberty, nevertheless, Muslims have been commanded by the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to instruct their children to start praying from as early as seven years old (*Abu Dāwūd*, 494).¹ This prophetic instruction not only shows the importance of the prayer but also signifies the importance of habituating children from a very young age to the act of prayer. The aim of inculcating the prayer from a young age is to instil this practice with the hope of establishing it firmly as a habitual practice into adulthood. The importance of the prayer has been underlined repeatedly by Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ. The Qur'ān continuously repeats the message of establishing the prayer, and the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ emphatically extolled the importance of the five daily prayers. The prayer provides nourishment for the soul and when this nourishment is not received the soul cannot grow and strengthen, like the body cannot grow and strengthen without good food and water. The prayer is a direct connection between Allāh and His servant. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said,

Allāh the Exalted had said, I have divided the prayer into two halves between Me and My servant, and My servant will receive what he asks. When the servant says: "Praise be to Allāh the Lord of the universe,"

¹ *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*, 494, 495; *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, 407; *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad*, vol. 2, no. 180,187, vol. 3, no. 404.

Allāh Most High says, "My servant has praised Me," and when the servant says, "The most Merciful the most Kind," Allāh says, "My servant has lauded Me." When the servant says, "The Master of the Day of Judgement," Allāh says, "My servant has glorified Me," and sometimes Allāh would say, "My servant has entrusted his affairs to Me." When the servant says, "You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help," Allāh says, "This is between Me and My servant and My servant will receive what he asks for." When the servant says, "Guide us along the straight path, the path of those whom You favour and not the path of those who earned Your anger and went astray," Allāh says, "This is for My servant and My servant will receive what he asks for" (*Muslim*, 775).

This ḥadīth beautifully encapsulates the relationship between the Creator and His creation. The prayer is an opportunity for the creation to speak to the Creator and to ask Him for their wants and needs. Allāh is there to listen to our supplications.

Unfortunately, human life can be complicated and some people can neglect the prayer for various reasons. This section will look into the possibility of making up the prayers the deceased has missed. Prayers can be either compulsory or voluntary. This part will only look at the five daily compulsory prayers and other obligatory (*wājib*) prayers missed by the deceased.

It is agreed by the consensus of Muslim jurists that the two-unit (*rak'ā*) prayer after circumambulation of the Ka'ba is permitted on behalf of the deceased when *hajj* or *'umra* is done on their behalf.¹ However, Muslim jurists have differed regarding the permissibility of offering other prayers on behalf of the deceased. There are two opinions:

The first group: The general view of this group of scholars is that it is permissible for a person to pray any compulsory (*fard*) or obligatory (*wājib*) prayer the deceased had missed. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Umar, Awzā'i, Aṭā', Abū Thawr and Ishāq ibn Rāhwayh. The view of the majority of Ḥanbalī jurists is that any prayers due

¹ This topic will be discussed further on in detail. Shīrbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439.

on account of vows can be prayed in substitution on behalf of the deceased. In like manner, it is permissible for a person to bequeath that his prayer on account of his vow should be delegated after his death, although his bequest does not oblige his heirs to perform that prayer.² Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, a Mālikī jurist, went as far as declaring that a person could be hired to pray on behalf of the deceased.³ This opinion was favoured by some Shāfi'ī jurists. The majority of Mālikīs and the majority of Shāfi'īs, however, assert that it is not valid to hire a person to make up for the prayers of a dead person.⁴

The second group: This group of scholars holds a contrary position to that aforementioned. They maintain that no prayer can be performed on behalf of the deceased nor is any bequest to that effect valid. This opinion is held by the Ḥanafīs, the majority of Mālikīs and the majority of Shāfi'īs. 'Aynī, Qarāfi, Ibn Baṭṭāl and Qāḍī 'Iyād claim that there is consensus (*ijmā'*) of opinion that making up for prayers on behalf of the deceased is not valid.⁴

The Evidence

The jurists advocating the validity of a person making up for the prayers of a deceased person argue their opinion on more or less the same grounds as the arguments for paying off debts. That is to say, they argue that Allāh declares in the Qur'ān that the estate should be divided after debts and bequests are settled: "After bequests that were bequeathed have been honoured and debts have been settled" (Q 4:11).

¹ Ḥaṭṭāb, *Mawāhib al-Jalīl*, 2:543; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 9:30; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:90; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:336; Ibn Qudāma, 'Abdullāh, 1988. *Al-Kāfi*, Beirut: Maktab al-Islāmī (henceforth cited as Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Kāfi*), 4:430.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibn 'Ābidīn, *Hāshiya*, 2:118; 'Aynī, *Umdat al-Qārī*, 11:60, 23:21; Qarāfi, Abū 'l-Abbās Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-Ṣanhājī, 1998. *Al-Furūq wa Anwār al-Burūq fi Anwār al-Furūq*, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kitāb (henceforth cited as Qarāfi, *Al-Furūq*), 3:187; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Mawāhib al-Jalīl*, 2:543; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:372; Shīrbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:336.

Prayer, fasting and the like are debts owed to Allāh and therefore must be settled as a matter of priority. Furthermore, it is recorded that some people came to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ telling him that a member of their family had passed away without observing an obligatory fast or *ḥajj* and asking if they should observe that act on their behalf. The Prophet replied in the affirmative.¹ ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās narrates that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “O Messenger of Allāh, my mother has died and not observed one month of fasting, should I make it up for her?” The Prophet replied, “If your mother had a debt, would you have paid that off on her behalf?” The man replied in the affirmative. The Prophet told him, “The debt of Allāh has more right to be settled” (*Muslim*, 3694).

Here the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ has made it clear that any debt owing to Allāh must be paid off, in the same way as debts owing to people.² This proves that obligatory acts of worship can be performed on behalf of the deceased because such was sanctioned by the Prophet ﷺ himself. The proponents of this view seek to strengthen their opinion further by citing the opinions of Ibn ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه. With regards the former, it is related that Ibn ‘Umar ordered a woman whose mother vowed to pray at Qubā’ to do it on her mother’s behalf.³ Likewise, it is narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās decreed that if a person dies and has an unfulfilled vow his heirs should make up for it on his behalf.⁴

The jurists of the opposing view, that it is not valid for a person to make up for the prayer of a deceased person, support their argument by citing the ḥadīth which relates that the Prophet ﷺ said, “None should pray on behalf another nor should one fast on behalf of another” (*Nasā’i, Al-Kubrā*, 3126).

Here it is clear that the Prophet ﷺ did not allow a person to perform the prayer or fast on behalf of another person. In like manner, it is recorded that both Ibn ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbās also held the

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3694, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1852.

² Nawawī, *Al-Majmū’*, 5:309; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:518.

³ ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-Qārī*, 23:210.

⁴ *Ibid.*

view of the impermissibility of performing the prayer or fasting on behalf of a deceased person.¹

Ibn al-Humām criticises the argument that a person can make up for the missed prayers of a deceased person, saying that “prayer” cannot be considered as a “debt.”² Secondly, ‘Aynī asserts that the traditions related from Ibn ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbās are contradictory because one narration records that Ibn ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbās supported the validity of making up for prayers on behalf of the deceased and the other suggests they opposed it. Therefore, these traditions cannot be used as proof for any argument.³ On the other hand, Ibn al-Qayyim criticises the advocates of the opinion that a person cannot make up for the prayer of the deceased by calling into question the authenticity of the traditions, indicating that the Prophet ﷺ forbade one person praying or fasting on behalf of another person. Ibn al-Qayyim argues that the traditions supporting making up for fasts and *ḥajj* is directly the statement of the Prophet ﷺ while the contrary ḥadīth is the saying of Ibn ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbās. Therefore, the Prophet’s statement must take precedence over any other view.⁴ However, it should be pointed out that according to Nasā’i the contrary ḥadīth is transmitted in an authentic manner.⁵

Any claims of consensus are highly exaggerated. The fact that there were some prophetic Companions who maintained that making up prayer for the deceased is valid puts to rest any claim of consensus. The prayer, like other acts of worship, is an individual physical act of worship, which intrinsically implies that an individual has to perform it in person. The arguments against prayer by proxy being allowed are interesting. One of the key points is that obedience to Allāh entails willingly performing tasks Allāh has prescribed and not delegating it to someone else to perform it instead. Exceptions can be made but this requires an explicit instruction from the law-

¹ ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-Qārī*, 23:210.

² Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:84.

³ ‘Aynī, *‘Umdat al-Qārī*, 23:210.

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⁵ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:601.

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⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, pp. 221–222.

⁵ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṣār*, 4:601.

giver providing a dispensation, such as the two-unit prayer after *ṭawāf* (circumambulation) of the Ka'ba.¹

Paying Expiation

As an alternative to physically making up for missed prayers on behalf of the deceased, some Ḥanafī jurists maintain that heirs of the deceased can pay expiation (*fidya*) for any prayers missed. The expiation is 1.03 litres of wheat (or its cash equivalent) for every prayer missed including the *witr* prayer.² The evidence for this is the tradition relating that Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه said, "None should pray on behalf of another nor should a person fast on behalf of another but people should be fed instead."³

Although there is disagreement among scholars regarding the validity of paying *fidya*, it is nevertheless a righteous act done on behalf of the deceased to compensate for his omissions. There is no guarantee that it will amend for the prayers missed, but it will hopefully act as a means by which closeness as well as forgiveness may be attained on behalf of the deceased. What gives this opinion a bit more strength is the fact that the traditions relating to the validity of praying or fasting on behalf of the dead mainly comes from Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās and 'Ā'isha رضي الله عنها. However, these traditions seem to contradict themselves in terms of the statement not matching the actions of the narrators. That is to say, there are some traditions recorded that Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās and 'Ā'isha acted otherwise. In a case where the statement of the ḥadīth narrator contradicts their action, preference is given to their actions over their statements.

Shurunbulālī launches a sharp attack regarding hiring a person to

¹ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:601; Mālik, *Muwatta'*, p. 34; Cf footnotes of Ḥasan ibn 'Ammār al-Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Īdāh wa Najāt al-Arwāḥ*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya (1995) (henceforth cited as Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Īdāh*), p. 170.

² Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Īdāh*, p. 170.

³ Cf footnotes of Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Īdāh*, p. 170.

pray or fast on behalf of a dead person. He writes in condemnation of the practice of hiring, but in support of the practice of the *fidya*,

As for what ignorant people practise nowadays by paying a poor person to pray or fast on behalf of the dead amounts to nothing. Rather, (it is more fruitful to assume that) Allāh will overlook the deceased on account on the charity (*fidya*) the lawgiver has stipulated.¹

Making up for Fasts on Behalf of the Deceased

Fasting, in Islam, is one of the great spiritual institutions of worshipping Allāh. Fasting generates a deep sense of piety and God-consciousness in a person and it is a private transaction between Allāh and His creation. The person fasting forsakes his habitual desires for the sake of Allāh. A person does this for no other purpose or gain other than the pleasure of his Lord Most High. Allāh has made fasting the month of Ramaḍān compulsory upon Muslims of mature age, who possess sanity and good health. Fasting is one of the five cardinal acts of worship in Islam. Besides compulsory fasts there are voluntary fasts, which Muslims are encouraged to observe if they are able to do so. This section will only look at the compulsory fasts a person has missed and failed to observe prior to his death. There can be various situations for this. The compulsory fasts can either be the fast of Ramaḍān a person failed to observe or obligatory fasts on account of atonements such as the atonement of homicide, vows and the like. The circumstances of failure to observe the fasts may either be due to the person being physically unable to observe these fasts prior to death, or because the person, although physically able, nevertheless neglects to observe these fasts for whatever reason. All this will be discussed under three headings:

1. The ruling of making up fasts for a person who died before being physically able to fast the days of Ramaḍān;

¹ Ibid.

2. The ruling of making up fasts for a person who died in spite of being physically able to fast the days of Ramaḍān;
3. The ruling of making up fasts for a person who died and did not fast for atonements or vows.

Making up Fasts for a Person Who Died before Being Physically Able to Fast the Days of Ramaḍān

Muslim jurists have differed regarding the ruling of making up fasts for a person who dies before being physically able to fast the days of Ramaḍān. Their opinions can be divided into three groups:

The first group: This group of scholars maintains that if a person dies after the fasts of Ramaḍān have become obligatory for him, but was unable to observe the fast due to a legally valid excuse such as illness, travelling, pregnancy, old age, extreme thirst or hunger and the like, then the obligation of fasting is suspended and there is no need to make up for these fasts, nor is there any need for expiation (*fiḍya*) (for those who maintain the validity of *fiḍya*). This person will not be considered wrongful for missing his fast. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars such as Ibn ‘Abbās, Zuhri, the Ḥanafis, Shāfi‘is, and Ḥanbalis.¹

The second group: The view of this group is that if a person dies after the fasts of Ramaḍān have become obligatory for him, but was unable to observe the fasts due to a valid legal excuse such as illness, then that person will carry no blame; however, his heirs should fast on his behalf. This is the opinion of the Mālikīs.²

The third group: It is the view of this group of scholars that if a person dies after the fasts of Ramaḍān have become obligatory for him, but was unable to observe the fast due to a valid legal excuse,

¹ Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Īdāh*, pp. 169–170; Ibn ‘Abidin, *Hāshiya*, 2:117; Shīrīnī, *Mughnī ‘l-Muhtāj*, 1:438; Nawawī, *Majmū‘*, 6:368; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:142; Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qinā‘*, 2:334.

² Bājī, Sulaymān ibn Khalaf, 1950. *Al-Muntaqā Sharḥ al-Muwatta‘a*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-‘Arabī (henceforth cited as Bājī, *Al-Muntaqā*), 2:63.

his heirs are obliged to render expiation for every day a fast was broken. The expiation is 1.03 litres of wheat to be given to the poor.¹ This opinion is held by Ṭāwūs and Qatāda.

The Evidence

The advocates of the opinion that if a person dies after the fasts of Ramaḍān have become obligatory for him but was unable to observe the fast due to a valid legal excuse, support their opinion by referring to the Qur’ān. They argue that Allāh says in the Qur’ān, “Allāh does not burden a soul more than it can bear” (Q 2:286).

Not overburdening humankind with duties and acts of worship beyond their capacity is the principle by which Allāh prescribes tasks for His servants. When a person is unable to execute a prescribed act of worship due to a legal excuse and is overtaken by the calamity of death, he cannot be held responsible for that action. To charge such a person with the responsibility of executing the task is contradicting the principle set by Allāh of not burdening a soul with more than it can bear. Further to this, it is narrated on the authority of ‘Ubāda ibn Nusayy that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “If a person becomes ill during the month of Ramaḍān and remains ill until he dies, no expiation is due, but if he regains health and does not make up for it before he dies, expiation is due.”² This ḥadīth provides clear guidance from the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ that a person who dies after the fasts of Ramaḍān have become obligatory for him but was unable to observe the fast due to a valid excuse is not considered blameworthy or liable to fast.

The scholars of the second and third view support their positions by pointing out that Allāh has made fasting obligatory upon an ill person. Allāh says in the Qur’ān, “And he who is present during the month of Ramaḍān must fast. But if a person is ill or on a journey then he should make up for it during other days” (Q 2:185).

This verse proves that Allāh has made it obligatory upon people

¹ Nawawī, *Al-Majmū‘*, 6:372; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:142.

² Ṣan‘ānī, ‘Abd al-Razzāq Ibn al-Humām, 1970. *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, Cairo: Maktab al-Islāmī, 4:237.

with legal excuses to fast. If they are unable to execute this duty then expiation or making up for it by heirs is necessary just as in the case of an extremely old person too frail to ever fast.

The scholars who maintain that no fast or expiation is due ultimately assert that the obligation upon a person who is unable to perform an obligatory act of worship due to a legal excuse, is temporarily suspended so long as the reason for the excuse persists. If in the meanwhile a person dies then he has died in a state where that particular act of worship is not obligatory for him. Therefore, it follows that there should be no blame, expiation or any need for a third party to make up for it. They criticise the scholars with the opposing view by pointing out that the Qur'ānic verse they have cited makes provision for the ill and traveller to fast when they are able to do so. Therefore it does not support the point they are trying to make. This is because the ability to fast did not materialise because of death and, therefore, they died under circumstances in which the obligation was suspended. As for the comparison with an extremely old person who is faced with the prospect of permanent inability to fast, it is a poor analogy. This is because prior to the month of Ramaḍān the old person is exempt from fasting anyway, and instead is obliged to render expiation. Hence, in the case of an old person the obligation is not to fast, but to render expiation. This expiation is a financial one and therefore it can be rendered post-mortem, as with a debt.

Making up Fasts for a Person Who Dies after having become Physically Able to Fast the Days of Ramaḍān

The question of whether or not making up fasts for a person who dies after having become physically able to fast the days of Ramaḍān, turns on the position regarding a third party performing an obligatory act of worship for another person. Muslim jurists are divided about the permissibility of this. Their opinions can be divided into two main views:

The first view: This group of scholars believes that if a person has

failed to fast during the month of Ramaḍān, for whatever reason, and dies without making them up despite having been able to, his heirs may fast on his behalf. However, there is difference of opinion among them regarding the details of how making up for the fast should be done. Ṭāwūs maintains that if a person failed to fast some of the days of Ramaḍān or the entire month and died having been able to make up for it, then some of his heirs should make up for it on behalf of the deceased person. The fasts may be split among a number of heirs; that is to say, if there were fifteen days to be made up for on behalf of the deceased, this number could be divided between three or four people. This opinion is also shared by Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Zuhri, Qatāda, Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān and Abū Thawr. On the other hand, Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab maintains that it is only permissible for the heirs of the deceased to fast on his behalf if they do not have the means to make atonement by feeding the poor. The view of the Shāfi'i school is conflicting. According to the "old view" Shāfi'i was of the opinion that it is commendable for the heirs to fast on behalf of the deceased who had failed to make up for the fasts, or alternatively, the heirs can render expiation by feeding the poor. Also, according to the "old view," Shāfi'i further asserts that the heirs can hire someone to make up for these fasts. This opinion has been adopted as the popular position by Nawawī and many other later Shāfi'i jurists. However, there is a group of Shāfi'i jurists who staunchly argue against this opinion saying that it is not a part of their school of thought. The great Andalusian scholar Ibn Ḥazm, went further claiming that expiation by feeding the poor is impermissible; instead making up for the fast is a compulsory (*fard*) duty upon the heirs. He continues by adding that if the deceased does not have an heir, then a person could be paid from his estate to make up for the fasts.¹

The second view: The scholars of this opinion maintain that it is not permissible for any person to make up for the fasts of another

¹ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṭār*, 4:601; 'Aynī, *Umdat al-Qārī*, 11:59; Shirbinī, *Mughnī l-Muhtāj*, 1:439-441; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:368-372; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:143; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:7-9; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:90, 8:25.

person who has failed to fast during the month of Ramaḍān and died after having been able to make it up. Instead the poor should be fed. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Umar and his father 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ā'isha ﷺ, Layth ibn Sa'd and one of the views of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Zuhri. According to the Ḥanafis, the heirs are obliged to render expiation by feeding the poor, provided the deceased had made a bequest to that effect. However, the expiation should be limited to one-third of the estate. If the expiation exceeds one-third the heirs are not obliged to observe the excess. If however, they do so voluntarily, then that is permissible. This is also the opinion of the Mālikis and Ḥanbalis and some argue that this is the strongest opinion of the Shāfi'i school. Although this group of scholars have agreed on the impermissibility of fasting on behalf of the deceased but with the option of expiation, they disagree regarding what the exact amount of expiation is. According to the Ḥanafis the expiation is 2.03 litres of dates or barley or 1.03 litres of wheat (or their cash equivalent) for every fast missed. According to the Mālikis the expiation is 0.51 litres of any foodstuff. The Shāfi'is also agree with this but stipulate that the foodstuff must be the staple of that area. The Ḥanbalis maintain that expiation is feeding the poor to an adequate amount.¹

The Evidences

The Qur'ānic evidence remains similar to the arguments regarding a third person performing acts of worship on behalf of another. That is to say, scholars who maintain the permissibility of the living performing mandatory acts of worship for the deceased, also hold that unperformed obligatory acts of worship become debts for which the deceased remains liable. Like any financial debt, this debt also needs to be settled. The rule that debts must be settled prior to the division of the estate is outlined clearly in the Qur'ān. Allāh says,

¹ Sarakhsi, *Al-Mabsūṭ*, 3:89; Ibn 'Abidin, *Ḥāshiyā*, 2:118; 'Aynī, *Umdat al-Qur'*, 11:60, 23:21; Qarāfi, *Al-Furūq*, 3:187; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Mawāhib al-Jalil*, 2:544; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:367; Shīrbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439-442; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:143-145; Bahūtī, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:334-335.

"After bequests that were bequeathed have been honoured and debts have been settled" (Q 4:11).

The advocates of the opinion that heirs should observe the fast on behalf of a person who had failed to fast during the month of Ramaḍān, for whatever reason, and died after having been able to make up for the fast, produce clear prophetic traditions to support their argument. It is narrated on the authority of 'Ā'isha that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ said, "Whoever dies and has unobserved fasts, his heirs should fast on his behalf" (*Bukhārī*, 1952, *Muslim*, 2553). This ḥadīth is clear in that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ commanded the heirs to fast on behalf of the deceased for any unobserved fast. This instruction is unrestricted and applies to those who neglected to fast even after having been physically able to do so.

The jurists of the opposing view argue that fasting on behalf of a dead person is not valid because the Qur'ān tells us, "And that there is not for man except that good for which he strives" (Q 53:39). This verse means that man cannot receive any benefit for actions that he did not do himself. Hence, his failure to fast, even after having been able to do so, cannot be made up for. To further strengthen their argument the jurists refer to the ḥadīth where it is related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When a person dies his ability to earn good deeds (and reward) come to an end, except for continuous charity (*ṣadaqa jāriya*), or knowledge from which people benefit, or a righteous child who prays for him" (*Muslim*).¹

This ḥadīth is evident in that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ has clearly articulated that a person can no longer gain reward for deeds after death except by the three aforementioned means; that is, continuous charity, knowledge from which people benefit, or a righteous child who prays for him. Besides the evidences from the Qur'ān and the Sunna there are also claims of consensus about the invalidity of a person fasting on behalf of another person. Imām Mālik, the great scholar of Madīna, asserts, "I have not heard of any Companions or *Tābi'īn* (Successors of the Companions) in Madīna

¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 5:75, and others.

who had commanded a person to fast or pray on behalf of another person”¹ In like manner, Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ claims that there is consensus of Muslim scholars on the invalidity of fasting and praying on behalf of another person.²

There is much debate and criticism over the use of the different evidences adduced by both groups of scholars. There are two major criticisms regarding the ḥadīth evidence provided by the first group (those who maintain that one person may fast on behalf of another). ‘Aynī asserts that the ḥadīth is weak and therefore cannot be offered as proof. ‘Aynī continues by saying that Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was asked regarding this tradition and he replied that this tradition is not *mahfūz*³ due to ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Abī Ja‘far, and as a consequence, it is rendered a *munkar*⁴ narration.⁵ Likewise, other scholars have criticized the authenticity of this tradition. Bayhaqī relates from Shāfi‘ī that he did not accept the tradition of Ibn ‘Abbās that a person could fast on behalf of another person, because Zuhri did not relate this tradition from Ibn ‘Abbās. This is despite the very long companionship Zuhri had with ‘Ubaydullāh ibn ‘Abdillāh, the sub-narrator of ḥadīth from Ibn ‘Abbās. Rather, Zuhri’s tradition mentions a fast on account of a vow.⁶ Therefore, it is most likely that the ḥadīth “whoever dies and has unobserved fasts, his heirs should fast on his behalf” is not *mahfūz*. It is also related that Mālik did not accept this tradition because of its apparent contradiction with other sources. Mālik pointed out that the tradition had not been accepted by the jurists of Madīna. Secondly, there is conflation in the chain of narration as well as the text. It contradicts the ḥadīth

¹ Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:84.

² Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qinā’*, 2:336.

³ *Mahfūz* is a ḥadīth that is transmitted by a stronger narrator of ḥadīth and is contrary to a ḥadīth related by a narrator of an inferior rank.

⁴ *Munkar* is a ḥadīth that is related by a weak narrator and contradicts an authentic narrator.

⁵ ‘Aynī, *Umdat al-Qārī*, 11:60.

⁶ The tradition states that Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubāda asked the Prophet ﷺ what he should do because his mother died and she did not observe the fast she made on account of a vow. The Prophet told him that he should fast on her behalf (narrated by Bukhārī and Muslim).

that mentions the Prophet ﷺ prohibiting a person from fasting or prayer on behalf of another person. Moreover, the ḥadīth contradicts Qur’ānic verses, which implies the invalidity of surrogacy in prayer or fasts. The Qur’ān states, “And every soul earns not except against itself, and no burden bearer will bear the burden of another person” (Q 6:164). Also the verse, “And that there is nothing for man other than that good for which he strives” (Q 53:39).

In refutation of these criticisms Ibn al-Qayyim launches a very strong critique over any claims of weakness in the ḥadīth “Whoever dies and has unobserved fasts his heirs should fast on his behalf.” He argues that the tradition has been transmitted by various chains and recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim. These traditions have been regarded as authentic by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Shāfi‘ī. Therefore, there remains no argument about its acceptability.¹ Furthermore, Nawawī asserts that the correct position of the Shāfi‘ī school is that it is permissible for a person to fast on behalf of a deceased person because the traditions supporting this opinion are authentic and the methodology of Shāfi‘ī in jurisprudence is that any ḥadīth that is authentic represents his opinion.²

The second part of the criticism is that the above ḥadīth can be interpreted to mean atonement. This view is held by the Ḥanafī scholar Bābartī and the majority of Shāfi‘ī jurists.³

Responding to the Qur’ānic evidences provided by the second group of scholars who maintain the invalidity of fasting on behalf of the dead, some scholars point out that the verse “And that there is nothing for man other than that good for which he strives” (Q 53:39), is abrogated by the verse “And those who believed and whose descendants followed them in faith; We will join with them their descendants, and We will not deprive them of anything of their deeds” (Q 52:21). It is for this reason that righteous children will stand as good deeds for their parents on the Day of Judgement and

¹ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, pp. 220–221.

² Nawawī, *Al-Majmū’*, 6:369–370.

³ Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:85; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū’*, 6:369.

their intercession will be accepted for each other.¹ It is noteworthy that the claim of abrogation is improper, because abrogation is only applicable to legal rulings and not to information the Qur'an provides. Regarding the tradition that, when a person dies his ability to incur good deeds (and reward) come to an end, except for continuous charity (*ṣadaqa jāriya*), or knowledge from which people benefit or a righteous child who prays for him (*Muslim*),² Ibn al-Qayyim remarks that there is no proof or strength in using this tradition to prove their point. This is because the Prophet ﷺ told us that a dead person can no longer perform acts of worship. This however, does not prevent a living person from performing acts of worship and then bestowing it upon the dead. Hence, there is a difference between performing an act of worship and bestowing an act of worship.³

The claim of consensus is a highly exaggerated one. It is difficult to give any credence to the claim of consensus especially in light of great scholastic dissension. It is also problematic to dismiss as weak the ḥadīth, which clearly mentions the Prophet ﷺ allowing heirs to fast on behalf of the deceased. The ḥadīth has been recorded by both Bukhārī and Muslim. Furthermore, the ḥadīth has been transmitted by Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, Mujāhid, 'Aṭā' and 'Ikrima from Ibn 'Abbās. Bayhaqī asserts that all ḥadīth experts consider this tradition to be authentic and he does not know any difference of opinion regarding this.⁴ Likewise, the interpretation of the ḥadīth to mean atonement by means of feeding the poor does not stand up. This is because "fast" is not employed to mean "feeding the poor" in Arabic. Secondly, the rule for interpreting words to mean something other than its literal meaning is when there is an obstacle preventing the literal meaning to be taken into consideration. The ample ḥadīth recorded proves clearly the validity of heirs fasting on behalf of the deceased, and that fasting and not atonement is required.

¹ Ibn 'Abidin, *Hāshiya*, 2:237; Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:309.

² *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 5:75, and many others.

³ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, pp. 220–221.

⁴ Shawkānī, *Nayl al-Awṣār*, 4:601.

Although the argument that fasting on behalf of the dead has very strong evidential support, it is very difficult to logically understand it. That is to say, it contradicts the principles of *qiyās* (analogical reasoning). This is because logic suggests that individual acts of worship cannot be performed by another person. It is for this reason that a living person cannot have someone else praying or fasting on his behalf, the same principle thus extends after death. Furthermore, it does contradict other traditions that mention the Prophet ﷺ not allowing fasting and prayer on behalf of others. Perhaps the best way of understanding this issue is that the initial ruling confirmed the validity of a person fasting on behalf of the dead, and that this was later cancelled.

Making up Fasts for a Person Who Died and has not Observed Obligatory Fasts on Account of Vows and Atonement

I have previously discussed the meaning and types of atonements on account of vows and expiation due to negligence. Readers may find it useful to revisit it for the purpose of recapitulation. Muslim jurists have differed regarding making up fasts for a person who has died having failed to observe obligatory fasts on account of vows and atonements. There are three views regarding this:

The first view: The scholars holding this view maintain that if a person dies without observing obligatory fasts on account of vows or atonements, his heirs can make up for them regardless of whether or not the deceased had made such a bequest. This is the opinion of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Zuhri, Qatāda, Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān, Ibn 'Abbās, Ṭāwūs and Abū Thawr. It is also one of the opinions of Shāfi'ī and declared by Nawawī to be the strongest view. While Nawawī upholds this fast to be commendable for the heirs, Ibn Ḥazm maintains that it is obligatory on the heirs.¹

¹ Shirbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439–441; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:370–373; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:2, 7–9, 8:27; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 8:25, 11:97.

The second view: This group of scholars maintains an opposing view to the aforementioned scholars. They maintain that it is permissible to fast on behalf of a dead person on account of vows only, but not for atonements. Instead, the heirs should feed the poor (*fiḍya*) to compensate for the atonement. This is one of the views of Ibn 'Abbās, Layth ibn Sa'd and the Ḥanbalī school. Unlike Ibn Ḥazm, the Ḥanbalīs are clear that it is not obligatory for heirs to make up for fasts occasioned by vows but they can do so out of the goodness of their hearts.¹

The third view: This group of scholars argues that it is not valid to fast on behalf of another person on account of fasts due to vows or atonements. Instead, the heirs are obliged to feed the poor (*fiḍya*) provided the deceased has made a bequest to that effect. If no bequest has been made the heirs are not obliged to make any expiation. Also, any expiation made must be limited within one-third of the estate. If it exceeds one-third of the estate the excess can be disregarded. If no bequest is made, but the heirs voluntarily make expiation on behalf of the deceased, that is also valid. This is maintained by the Ḥanafīs, Mālikīs and the majority of Shāfi'ī scholars. They also maintain that this rule only applies to a person who dies after having been able to observe the fasts. If, on the other hand, a person dies prior to becoming able to observe these fasts no expiation is due at all. For example, a person is ill and vows that if he regains good health he would fast three days for the sake of Allāh. If this person does not become better and dies, no fast or expiation is due from him.²

¹ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, p. 225; Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:335; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:143, 9:30; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:370-373; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:2, 7-9, 8:27; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 8:25, 11:97.

² Sarakhsī, *Al-Mabsūṭ*, 3:90; Ibn 'Abidin, *Ḥāshiyā*, 2:118; Qarāfi, *Al-Furūq*, 3:187; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 8:497; Shirbinī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439-442; Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 8:26.

The Evidence

This issue is connected with the issue of making up fasts for a person who died after having been physically able to fast the days of Ramaḍān. The evidences and arguments are more or less the same. The only slight difference is the inclusion of vows, which has caused the Ḥanbalīs to make an exception. The grounds for this is an authentically transmitted ḥadīth by Abū Dāwūd, Nasā'ī and Aḥmad on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, that a woman on a sea journey (while experiencing turbulent waters) vowed that if Allāh saved her life she would fast one month. Allāh did save her but she failed to observe her fast before her death. Some of her relatives came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and told him of the situation. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, "Fast on her behalf."¹

Spiritual Retreat (*I'tikāf*)

There are many amazing spiritual benefits of *i'tikāf*. The idea of *i'tikāf* is to detach oneself from the toil of worldly affairs and concentrate on building a spiritual relationship with Allāh Most High. It is a unique process of cleansing the soul from the pollution of life and surrendering to the will of Allāh the Majestic. A person in *i'tikāf* remains in continuous worship even when they are resting. Shurunbulālī describes *i'tikāf* as the noblest of actions when it is done with sincerity.² Shurunbulālī adds that a person in *i'tikāf* is like a petitioner at the door of the Great, refusing to leave until his call has been heard.³ There are no specific rituals prescribed by the law to be performed while in *i'tikāf*. *I'tikāf* is a symbol of sacrifice a person makes in the hope of gaining closeness with Allāh, his

¹ See Bayhaqī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn, 1933. *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, India: Da'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Uthmāniyya, 4:256; Sijistānī, Abū Dāwūd, nd. *Sunan Abi Dāwūd*, Beirut: Al-Maktaba al-'Aṣriyya, 3:237; Nasā'ī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shu'ayb ibn 'Alī ibn Baḥr, 1963. *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Ḥalabī, 7:20.

² Shurunbulālī, *Nūr al-Idārah*, p. 260.

³ Ibid.

Creator. During *i'tikāf* a person must refrain from idle actions, vain behaviour, and any kind of sexual conduct.

A person should observe *i'tikāf* at a mosque where the five daily prayers are held in congregation. *I'tikāf* can be performed at any time, but the most commendable time to observe *i'tikāf* is during the last ten days of Ramaḍān. This was the habitual practice of the holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. It is related on the authority of 'Ā'isha that the Prophet ﷺ used observe *i'tikāf* in the last ten days of Ramaḍān till the end of his life and then his wives used to observe *i'tikāf* after him (*Bukhārī*, 2026). The practice of *i'tikāf* predates the advent of Islam and the law Muḥammad ﷺ brought. Allāh tells us in the Qur'ān that he commanded the Prophets Ibrāhīm and Ismā'il ﷺ to "Purify the Ka'ba for those who perform *ṭawāf* (circumambulation of the Ka'ba), the ones in *i'tikāf* and for the ones who bow and prostrate."¹ There are various types of *i'tikāf* but the type of *i'tikāf* pertinent to this section of the book is the *i'tikāf* a person has made obligatory upon himself by virtue of making a vow.

There is a slight disagreement among Muslim jurists as to whether or not a person who has made a vow to observe *i'tikāf* is obliged to observe *i'tikāf* together with fasting. There are two views regarding this:

The first view: This group of scholars maintains that if a person did not vow to fast with his *i'tikāf* he is not obliged to do so. This is the view of the Shāfi'is and Ḥanbalīs and is also shared by 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās and Ibn Lubāba from the Mālikīs.²

The second view: The scholars of this group maintain that if a person vows to observe *i'tikāf* then he must do so together with fasting. This opinion is upheld by the Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs and is also agreed by Ibn 'Umar, 'Ā'isha, Nāfi' and others.³

¹ See Qur'ān 2:125.

² Ibn Rushd, *Al-Muqaddimāt*, 1:257; Ibn Rushd, *Bidayat al-Mujtabid*, 1:370; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:185; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 5:181-182.

³ Sarakhsī, *Al-Mabsūt*, 3:115; Ibn Rushd, *Al-Muqaddimāt*, 1:257-258; *Bidayat al-*

The Evidence

The argument as to whether or not a person must fast whilst observing *i'tikāf* is focussed on prophetic traditions. Some of these traditions mention that the Prophet ﷺ told people to observe *i'tikāf*, and did not mention fasting. An example of this is the case of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ who told the Prophet ﷺ that he had vowed to observe *i'tikāf* at the Ka'ba before he became a Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ told him to observe that vow, but did not mention anything about fasting (*Bukhārī*, 2042, 2043). However, other traditions mention that the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is no *i'tikāf* without fasting."¹

Spiritual Retreat on Behalf of the Deceased

There are three opinions regarding the validity of performing *i'tikāf* on behalf of the deceased:

The first view: The scholars of this view maintain that if a person dies without observing *i'tikāf* his heirs can make up for it regardless of whether or not the deceased had made a prior bequest to this effect. This is the opinion of the Ḥanbalīs and one of the opinions of Shāfi'ī. This is also maintained by 'Ā'isha, Ibn 'Abbās ؓ, Ibn Ḥazm, Ḥasan ibn Ḥayy, Awzā'ī, Abū Thawr, and others. Ibn Ḥazm also maintained that if the heirs refuse to observe the *i'tikāf* another person may be hired to perform it on the deceased's behalf, even if that means the cost of it will take up the entire estate.²

The second view: This group of scholars argues that it is not permissible to perform *i'tikāf* on behalf of a deceased person on account of his vows, instead the heirs should feed the poor. Feeding the poor is calculated at the same rate as the expiation of missing fasts (*fiḍya*). That is to say, the poor are given 1.03 litres of wheat

Mujtabid, 1:370; Ibn 'Abidin, *Hāshiyā*, 2:130; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:187; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Mawāhib al-Jalīl*, 2:460.

¹ Bayhaqī, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 4:317; Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak*, 1:440; Dāraqutnī, *Sunan al-Dāraqutnī*, 2:199.

² Shirbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:372; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 5:197, 8:27; Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:335; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 9:30.

(or its cash equivalent) for every day vowed to spend in *i'tikāf*. This is only obligatory on the heirs provided the deceased had made a bequest to that effect. However, in the absence of any bequest, if the heirs voluntarily atone for it then that is valid. Any atonement must be limited within one-third of the estate. If it exceeds that amount the consent of the other heirs is required. This is the opinion of the Ḥanafīs. They further mention that if a person vows to observe *i'tikāf* when he is unfit to do so, for reasons such as illness or travelling, and dies before being able to observe *i'tikāf*, nothing is due from him. The Mālikīs and some Shāfi'īs also share this opinion, but maintain that the expiation is 0.51 litres of foodstuff.¹

The third view: The view of this group of scholars is that no expiation or surrogacy is valid in *i'tikāf*, and the responsibility for the obligation on the part of the deceased is carried with him to the grave. This view represents the more popular opinion of the Shāfi'īs.²

The Evidence

Once again the evidence of the first group of scholars turns more or less upon the same arguments that have been provided for other similar cases. That is to say, that any unobserved obligatory actions remain the responsibility of the deceased, and death does not absolve him from the obligation. It therefore remains as a financial obligation to be settled through expiatory payments. Like any other financial debt, the expiation takes precedence over the rights of the heirs to the estate. This is on account of the Qur'ānic precept, "After bequests that were bequeathed have been honoured and debts have been settled" (Q 4:11).

Further to this, the many ḥadīths (cited previously) reveal that when people came to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and told him that some members of their family had passed away without performing certain obligatory acts of worship, the Prophet ﷺ commanded

¹ Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 5:197; Sarakhsī, *Al-Mabsūṭ*, 3:123; Ibn 'Ābidīn, *Hāshiyah*, 2:119; Shīrbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:440.

² Shīrbīnī, *Mughnī 'l-Muḥtāj*, 1:439; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 6:372.

them to make up for the actions the deceased had failed to observe. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās narrates that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh! My mother has died and not observed one month of fasting, should I make it up for her?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "If your mother had a debt would you not have paid that off on her behalf?" The man replied in the affirmative. The Prophet ﷺ told him, "The debt to Allāh has the most right to be settled" (*Muslim*, 3694). As an extension of this, the same principle could be applied to the case of *i'tikāf*.

The scholars of the second view argue their views on the grounds of analogy with fasting. This is because they regard *i'tikāf* as something that is not possible to make up for by proxy, but because *i'tikāf*, according to them, is not valid without fasting, one would atone for the fast missed in the hope that it will also compensate for the *i'tikāf*. The scholars of the third view argue their opinion by pointing out that Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ have not made any provisions to support the permissibility of making up for missed *i'tikāf*. Hence, in the absence of any proof one cannot regard any atonement as valid compensation for missed *i'tikāf*.

Performing Ḥajj or 'Umra on Behalf of the Deceased

Ḥajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is one of the greatest symbols of sacrifice, because it encompasses various aspects of personal forfeiture. *Ḥajj* requires a high degree of both financial and physical sacrifice. This sacrifice should not be under estimated. Performing *ḥajj* is no cheap affair. The journey can cost thousands of pounds and the physical sacrifice is equally taxing. *Ḥajj* represents the ultimate sacrifice a person can make for the sake of attaining Allāh's pleasure. It starts from the story of the Prophet Ibrāhīm ؑ and the trials Allāh set him to test his level of submission. These trials pushed the boundaries of human nature to the limits. Yet, Ibrāhīm ؑ proved his love and submission for Allāh with distinction. To ask a man to take his baby child and wife to the middle of nowhere and leave

them there by themselves or to ask a man to cut the throat of his child are indeed tasks that would test any man's faith. Yet, without hesitation or procrastination, Ibrāhīm performed these tasks with excellence. It was these acts of selfless sacrifice that earned him the accolade of *Imām li-'l-Nās* (the Leader for Mankind). Ibrāhīm is indeed the patriarch for Jews, Christians and Muslims. *Hajj* is an institution to teach and instil the lessons of sacrifice. Without sacrifice man cannot attain closeness to Allāh, and through sacrifice man can become "friends" with Allāh.

Hajj is a demonstration of solidarity, sacrifice and submission to Allāh Most High. It is performed only during the month of *ḥajj* (*Dhū 'l-Hijja*) starting on the 8th of it. *Hajj* is the largest gathering in the world and it must be performed by people who are physically, mentally, and financially able to do so. Along with its toil, *ḥajj* is an amazing spiritual journey and unique in uniting people of different races and languages under the banner of Islamic fraternity. Although *ḥajj* can only be performed seasonally, *ʿumra* (or the minor *ḥajj*) can be performed throughout the year. This section will look at the ruling on a person who dies without performing *ḥajj* and someone else performing it in his stead.

Performing *Hajj* on Behalf of the Deceased

There are two situations regarding a person who has died without performing *ḥajj*. The first is that a person has died before he was physically and financially capable of performing *ḥajj*; and the second is a person who dies after having become able to perform *ḥajj*.

Performing Hajj on Behalf of a Person Who Died before Being Able to Perform Hajj

There is a difference of opinion among scholars regarding the ruling of a person who has died before becoming able to perform *ḥajj*, and whether or not the heirs must find someone to perform it on behalf of the deceased.

The first group: This group of jurists believes that if a person has died before being physically and financially able to perform *ḥajj*, his heirs will have to spend from his estate to perform *ḥajj* on his behalf. Even if this means that the entire estate will be used for this purpose. This is regardless of whether or not the deceased has made a bequest for it. However, if a person voluntarily performs *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased at his own expense, that is sufficient. This opinion is maintained by the Ḥanbalīs and is also shared by Ibn 'Abbās, Abū Hurayra, Ḍaḥḥāk, 'Aṭā', Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Awzā'i, Ibn Abī Laylā, and Ibn Ḥazm.¹

The second group: This group of scholars maintains that if a person has died before being physically and financially able to perform *ḥajj*, then the obligation of *ḥajj* drops and there is no need to make up for it. However, if the deceased has made a bequest so that his *ḥajj* should be performed, then after his death that bequest is honoured, provided that it does not exceed one-third of his estate. This is the opinion of the Ḥanafīs, Mālikīs, and Shāfi'īs and is shared by Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān, Sha'bī, Nakha'i, and others.²

The Evidence

The first group of scholars, those who maintain that if a person dies before becoming capable of performing *ḥajj*, that the obligation of it passes on to the heirs, argue that the Qur'ān commands Muslims to settle the debts of the deceased: "After bequests that were bequeathed have been honoured and debts have been settled" (Q 4:11).

For this group of scholars unfulfilled obligatory acts of worship remain as debts on the account of the deceased person. Like other financial debts, the debt of worship must be paid off, and it too, like any other financial debt, takes precedence over the heirs' right to inherit the estate. To add to the Qur'ānic evidences, it is pointed

¹ Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:61-65; Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qinā'*, 2:336, 393; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Al-Rūḥ*, p. 187; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:242.

² Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:242; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 2:494, 7:109, 8:497; Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:84.

out from prophetic traditions that some people came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him about their departed ones who had not performed *ḥajj*. The Prophet told them in these cases that they should perform *ḥajj* on their behalf. This instruction was absolute without any query by the Prophet as to whether or not the deceased was able to do *ḥajj*. Therefore, the ruling is that if a person were to die before having become able to perform *ḥajj*, the provisions to make up for it must be taken from his estate. It is related by Burayda,

One day when I was sitting with the Prophet ﷺ, a woman came and said, "I have bestowed my servant as a charity to my mother and she has now died." The Prophet replied, "You will have your reward and your charity is returned to you as inheritance." The woman said, "O Messenger of Allāh, my mother has a month of fasting due, should I fast on her behalf?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Fast on her behalf." The woman said, "She has never performed *ḥajj*, should I perform *ḥajj* on her behalf?" The Prophet said, "Perform *ḥajj* on her behalf" (*Muslim*, 2558).

The jurists of the opposing opinion maintain that if a person dies before having attained the physical and financial capacity to perform *ḥajj*, the entire obligation of *ḥajj* drops, and there is no need to perform *ḥajj*. They base this on the argument that the Qur'ān stipulates that a person should perform *ḥajj* if able to do so: "And due to Allāh from the people is pilgrimage to the House, for whoever is able to find thereto a way" (Q 3:97).

Therefore, when the conditions for the obligation of an act of worship are not found, the act of worship in question does not become obligatory. Hence, it does not make sense to still consider it obligatory to perform it. The same as a person who dies before the Maghrib prayer time starts, such a person cannot pray, nor is anything due from him because the prayer is not obligatory on him.

Jurists opposing the completion of *ḥajj* on behalf of a person who dies before becoming able to perform it criticise the interpretations of the ḥadīth offered by their counterparts. They object to the interpretation pointing out that it cannot be argued that the Prophet

ﷺ told the people that they should perform *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased regardless of whether or not it was compulsory for them. This is because a compulsory act of worship can only be compulsory if its conditions apply to the person. If the conditions do not apply the person is not obliged to perform it. This status does not change due to death. The Prophet's instruction to the people enquiring about doing *ḥajj* for another person has two possible interpretations: either it meant that *ḥajj* was compulsory on the deceased and they did not perform it before their deaths; or that the prophetic instruction was intended to emphasise its commendability rather than its compulsion.

Performing Ḥajj on Behalf of a Person Who Dies after Being Able to Perform Ḥajj

Unlike previous issues relating to fasting, prayer, and the like, the question of performing *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased is not a question of validity or invalidity. That is to say, the scholarly dissension in the cases of prayer, fasting and spiritual retreat was centred on the premise of whether or not the act of performing prayer, for instance, was valid on behalf of another person. The debate with respect to *ḥajj* does not regard its validity, because all jurists unanimously agree that performing *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased is valid. Rather, the question is whether or not it is obligatory for the heirs to perform *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased. With regard to this question there are two views:

The first view: The jurists taking this view argue that it is obligatory upon the heirs to perform *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased. This is regardless of whether or not the deceased has bequeathed it. The provisions to perform *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased will be taken from the estate, even if this means that the entire estate is used up in order to complete *ḥajj*. This is the opinion according to the Shāfi'is and Ḥanbalis and is also upheld by Ibn 'Abbās, Abū Hurayra, Ḍaḥḥāk, 'Aṭā', Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Awzā'ī, Ibn Abī Laylā, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Zuhri, Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab, Abū Thawr, and Ibn Ḥazm. The Shāfi'is also point out that if the deceased has wealth,

the money should be used to perform *hajj*, but if he has no wealth or not enough of it, then it is commendable for the heirs to perform *hajj* on his behalf. If it is not possible for the heirs to perform *hajj* then it is valid to hire someone for the purpose of performing *hajj*. The Ḥanbalīs also maintain similar views to this. However, there is a narration that Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said that the obligation to perform *hajj* ceases if the deceased does not have enough wealth to complete *hajj*. The majority of Ḥanbali jurists, however, maintain that it is commendable for the heirs to contribute to completing *hajj* on behalf of the deceased. This is on compassionate grounds and as a gesture of favour and kinship. Further to this, they maintain that if a stranger were to perform *hajj* without the permission of the heirs, then that will also suffice as *hajj* on behalf of the deceased.¹

The second view: The jurists holding this view argue that if a person dies after having become able to perform *hajj*, then it is not obligatory on the heirs to perform *hajj* on his behalf. However, if they wish to do so voluntarily, that will (God willing) suffice for *hajj*. If, on the other hand, the deceased bequeathed that after his death his *hajj* should be performed from his estate, that is honoured within one-third of its total value. This is the opinion of the Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs, and it is also the opinion of Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān, Shaʿbī, Nakhaʿī, Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, and others.²

The Evidence

The evidences regarding this issue turn upon the same themes as similar issues previously discussed. In other words, the essence of this argument has two branches. The first is the question as to whether or not a person can perform obligatory acts of worship on behalf of another person, and the second is whether or not it is obligatory upon the heirs to perform these acts of worship. The scholars who maintained the permissibility of another person performing acts

¹ Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:58, 61–64; Bahūtī, *Khashshāf al-Qināʾ*, 2:336, 393; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:242–244; Nawawī, *Al-Majmūʿ*, 7:109–116, 494, 8:494.

² Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:242; Nawawī, *Al-Majmūʿ*, 7:112–116; Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:320; Ibn ʿAbidīn, *Hāshiya*, 2:119.

of worship on behalf of another, confirmed the obligation upon the heirs to perform *hajj* on behalf of the deceased. Their opinion was largely influenced by their jurisprudential methodology (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). That is to say, according to their methodology (*uṣūl*) one should adhere to the literal meaning of the ḥadīth. Therefore, they construed the apparent command in the prophetic traditions to mean obligation. They use the prophetic analogy of debt with compulsory acts of worship, with both standing as equals in terms of repayment. Therefore, the Qurʾānic precept of repaying debt: “After bequests that were bequeathed have been honoured and debts have been settled” (Q 4:11) takes priority over any other rights. Further to this, there are ample traditions proving that the Prophet ﷺ commanded the heirs to perform *hajj* on behalf of their dead; such as the ḥadīth related by Burayda:

One day when I was sitting with the Prophet ﷺ, a woman came and said, “I have bestowed my servant as charity to my mother and she has now died.” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “You will have your reward and your charity is returned to you as inheritance.” The woman said, “O Messenger of Allāh, my mother has a month of fasting due, should I fast on her behalf?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Fast on her behalf.” The woman said, “She has never performed *hajj*, should I perform *hajj* on her behalf?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Perform *hajj* on her behalf” (*Muslim*, 2558).

The scholars opposing this view are quick to point out that the concept of one person performing acts of worship on behalf of others contradicts the theme and the message of the Qurʾān that conveys clearly that each individual is responsible for their actions and can achieve only that which they earn through their own endeavours. The Qurʾān states, “And every soul earns not except against itself, and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another person” (Q 6:164). Also, “And that there is not for man except that good for which he strives” (Q 53:39).

While the Shāfiʿīs and Ḥanbalīs in most cases accepted the validity of a person performing acts of worship on behalf of another,

the Ḥanafis and Mālikīs on the other hand, did not accept one person performing acts of worship on behalf of another, neither while alive nor after death. However, regarding *ḥajj* there seems to be a shift toward accepting its validity. The argument here changes from validity to obligation. Perhaps the change in opinion is due to the overwhelming evidence of ḥadīth confirming the validity of *ḥajj* on behalf of another person. Secondly, the acceptance of it by all Muslim jurists carries with it great weight, in terms of whether or not it is obligatory for heirs to have *ḥajj* performed on behalf of the deceased who has not made a bequest to this effect.

Hajj by Proxy

There is a general consensus that *ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased is permissible and valid. A parallel to this notion is that of a living person appointing another person to perform *ḥajj* on their behalf. However, there are conditions attached to this, although these conditions are not universally agreed by the jurists.

The first condition: The substitute must be a Muslim, sane and mature.

The second condition: The Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs argue that the substitute must have completed *ḥajj* for himself first. That is to say, the substitute must not be such a person that has not performed his own *ḥajj* while having the ability to do so. If such a person is appointed then the *ḥajj* he performs will count as his own *ḥajj* and not the *ḥajj* of the person he is representing. However, if a person has not completed his *ḥajj* because he is unable to do so, then such a person can act as a substitute for another person to perform the *ḥajj*. This is contrary to the Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs who maintain that it is not a condition for the substitute to have performed *ḥajj*, even if he is able to do so. The grounds for this debate are based on the ḥadīth transmitted by Ibn 'Abbās that the Prophet ﷺ heard a man say, "*labbayk* on behalf of Shubruma." The Prophet ﷺ enquired as to who Shubruma is. The man replied that it was his brother. The

Prophet asked the man whether he had performed *ḥajj* for himself first. When the man told him that he had not, the Prophet told him to make this *ḥajj* for himself and then to perform *ḥajj* for Shubruma.¹ This ḥadīth is clear in its suggestion that the Prophet ﷺ told that man to perform *ḥajj* for himself first and then to perform another *ḥajj* for his brother. In response to this argument the opponents point out that there are conflicting narrations regarding this tradition. Secondly, there is uncertainty about whether the tradition is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ or the statement of Ibn 'Abbās. This, therefore, brings into question further doubts about the authenticity of the ḥadīth. If it is accepted that there is no conflation then the ḥadīth is construed to mean preference and not obligation.²

It does seem a little strange that a person would perform *ḥajj* on behalf of someone else and postpone his own *ḥajj* while having the ability to do so. Consideration ought to be given to the priority of a person's own *ḥajj* before embarking on performing *ḥajj* for someone else. There are very strong prophetic traditions condemning a person who has not performed *ḥajj* while having the ability to do so.

The third condition: That the *ḥajj* journey is financed with the money of the person the substitute is representing. This is according to the Ḥanafīs. They argue that the obligation of *ḥajj* is related to the financial ability of the person. Therefore, the financial sacrifice cannot be realized except by financing the *ḥajj* journey. The Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs do not see this as a problem and assert that if any person, kin or otherwise, were to pay for the *ḥajj* from their own money, then that is perfectly fine. Their argument is based on an analogy that a debt of a person can be paid off by anyone, because the aim is to free a person from the responsibility of an obligatory act. In monetary matters there is no condition that any particular person must pay for something.

¹ Bayhaqī, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 4:336; *Sunan al-Dāraqūṭnī*, 2:270; and others.

² Ibn al-Humām, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*, 2:320–231.

Hajj by Proxy on Behalf of the Deceased

It is agreed by all jurists that *hajj* by proxy on behalf of the dead is valid and rewardable. However, they disagree as to whether or not this is sufficient as an obligatory *hajj*. There are two opinions regarding this:

The first view: The vast majority of scholars maintained that *hajj* by proxy is sufficient for an obligatory *hajj*. This is maintained by Abū Ḥanīfa and most Ḥanafīs, the Mālikīs, the Shāfi'īs, and the Ḥanbalīs.¹ It is also the opinion of Ibn 'Abbās, Abū Hurayra, and others.

The second view: This group of scholars hold the view contrary to the above opinion. That is to say, the deceased will only receive the reward, but the act of *hajj* is not discharged by the action of the proxy. This is the opinion of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, one of the students of Abū Ḥanīfa, and is also shared by many Mālikī jurists.²

The Evidence

The arguments as well as the evidence, once again, turn upon the same arguments presented above. Hence, the theme of *hajj* standing as a debt, as well as the prophetic traditions which record the Prophet ﷺ instructing the heirs to perform *hajj* on behalf of the deceased, forms the body of evidences for the first group of scholars. Regarding their opponents, the evidences and arguments are essentially the same as previous arguments of the same nature. That is to say, the invalidity of an individual performing an obligatory act of worship on behalf of someone else is seen to be illogical and contradictory to the Qur'ānic message.

¹ Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:184; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 7:110; Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:311; Ibn 'Abidin, *Hāshiya*, 2:239; Bājī, *Al-Muntaqā Sharḥ Muwaṭṭa'*, 2:270.

² Ibn al-Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 2:311; Ibn Nujaym, *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq*, 3:66; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Marwāhib al-Jalīl*, 2:543.

Is 'Umra Obligatory or Sunna?

'Umra is commonly referred to as the lesser or minor *hajj*, which may be performed at any time of the year. 'Umra is a highly virtuous act of worship and it has been highly extolled by Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ. Allāh tells us in the Qur'ān, "And complete your *hajj* and 'umra for the sake of Allāh" (Q 2:196). It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "'Umra is expiation for the sins committed between it and the previous one, and the reward for an accepted *hajj* (*hajj mabrūr*) is nothing but paradise" (*Bukhārī*, 1773). 'Umra is a simple form of *hajj* which involves circumambulation of the Ka'ba, a two unit prayer at the Station of Ibrāhīm (*Maqām Ibrāhīm*), walking between Mounts Ṣafā and Marwā, and the ritual is ended by trimming or shaving of the head. This, of course, must be done while in the state of *iḥrām*.¹

There is a difference of opinion amongst jurists regarding the ruling on performing 'umra.

The first view: It is the opinion of the Shāfi'ī, Ḥanbalī, and some Mālikī jurists that 'umra is an obligatory act of worship and must be performed by all Muslims fulfilling the qualifying criteria for its obligation. This opinion is also shared by Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, 'Alī, Jābir, Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, Ibn Ḥazm, and many others.²

The second view: Contrary to the first view, the Ḥanafīs and the vast majority of Mālikī jurists maintain that 'umra is a *sunna* and not obligatory.

The Evidence

The jurists of the first view prove their argument using the verse of the Qur'ān that details the command to perform 'umra. Allāh com-

¹ Readers should note that there are technical differences between the schools of thought regarding the rituals of performing 'umra. Therefore, consultation with the appropriate book should be made in order to understand the correct way to perform 'umra according to the particular school one may adhere to.

² Keller, *Reliance of the Traveller*, pp. 300-301; Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid*, 1:322; 'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 1:118; Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*, 2:310; Ibn Rushd, *Al-Muqaddima*, 1:400; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:41-42.

mands in the Qur'an, "And complete your *hajj* and *'umra* for the sake of Allāh" (Q 2:196). They argue that this verse is clear in that Allāh commands Muslims to perform both *hajj* and *'umra*. This is because it is a fact that *hajj* is obligatory, and the Qur'an commands Muslims to perform *hajj* and *'umra* together in one verse. Therefore, it is not possible to argue that *hajj* is obligatory and *'umra* is not. Prophetic traditions are also used to strengthen this view. It is transmitted on the authority of Zayd ibn Thābit ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "*Hajj* and *'umra* are two mandatory acts of worship."¹

The jurists of the second opinion argue that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was asked about whether or not *'umra* was obligatory. The Prophet responded saying, "No, if you do *'umra* it is good for you."² The prophetic tradition proves that *'umra* is not mandatory.

The supporters of the non-obligation of *'umra* assert that there are no authentic ḥadīth explicitly mentioning that *'umra* is obligatory. The ḥadīth that is mentioned by the first group of scholars suffers from observing the strict criteria of authenticity. The correct position is that it was the opinion of Zayd ibn Thābit that *hajj* and *'umra* are two mandatory acts of worship. With regards to the verse, it is a fact that not all imperative verbs in the Qur'an are taken to mean a command to an obligatory act of worship. Moreover, the verse commands Muslims to complete their *hajj* and *'umra* once they have put on the *iḥrām*. It is agreed by all jurists that completing *'umra* after wearing the *iḥrām* is a must. It is related that Shāfi'i was of the opinion that there is nothing proving the obligation of *'umra*, and as for the ḥadīth that implies its obligation they are not strong enough to be used as evidence.³ The jurists of the second view really have not provided any evidence better or stronger than their opponents. It is worth noting that despite the lack of authentic ḥadīth from the Prophet ﷺ there are some traditions mentioning prophetic Companions regarding *'umra* to be mandatory. It is recorded by

¹ Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak*, 1:471; Bayhaqī, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 4:351.

² Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad, 1969. *Musnad Aḥmad: Al-Faṭḥ al-Rabbānī fī Tartīb Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, Cairo: Dār al-Shihāb, 11:58.

³ Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*, 2:310.

Bukhārī that Ibn 'Umar said, "*Hajj* and *'umra* are obligatory for everybody" (*Bukhārī*, 1773). Of course, this does not amount to conclusive proof of the obligation of *'umra*, rather it is simply Ibn 'Umar's personal view.

The Ruling on Performing 'Umra on Behalf of the Deceased

Based on the previous discussion it is obvious that the difference of opinion will transfer to the ruling of performing *'umra* on behalf of the deceased. Hence, there are two views regarding this issue:

The first view: It is the opinion of the Shāfi'i and Ḥanbalī jurists that it is obligatory to perform *'umra* on behalf of the deceased. This is regardless of whether or not the deceased has bequeathed it. *'Umra* would be financed from the estate of the deceased, even if it means that the entire estate is spent in executing the *'umra*. This opinion is also shared by Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, Jābir, Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, Ibn Ḥazm, and many others.¹

The second view: This group of scholars maintains that it is not obligatory to perform *'umra* on behalf of the deceased unless the deceased makes a bequest to that effect. In that case, *'umra* must be financed from the wealth of the deceased, but must be restricted to one-third of the estate. This is the opinion maintained by the Ḥanafī and Mālikī jurists.²

The Evidence

The jurists of the first group argue their view using the ḥadīth related by Abū Razīn al-'Uqaylī that he said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allāh, indeed my father is a very old man. He cannot

¹ Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*, 2:310; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:41-42; Bahūtī, *Khashshaf al-Qinā'*, 2:336, 393; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:242; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 7:109.

² Ibn 'Ābidīn, *Ḥāshiyā*, 2:119; Bājī, *Al-Muntaqā*, 2:270; Ḥaṭṭāb, *Marwābiḥ al-Jalīl*, 3:3; Ṣan'ānī, *Subul al-Salām*, 2:310; Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:62-65; Ibn Qudāma, *Al-Mughnī*, 3:242; Nawawī, *Al-Majmū'*, 7:112.

perform *hajj*, *umra* or travel." The Prophet said to him, "Perform *hajj* and *umra* on behalf of your father."¹ The argument is that this tradition proves that *hajj* and *umra* should be performed as a matter of obligation. If that is the case then the ruling on unobserved obligatory actions remaining as a debt applies. In like manner, Ibn Ḥazm related that Ibn 'Abbās told a woman who came to him telling him that her mother died without performing *hajj* or *umra*. Ibn 'Abbās told her to perform *hajj* and *umra* on her behalf.² The scholars of the opposing view argue based on their understanding of the ruling on *umra*. Since *umra* is a voluntary act of worship there is no obligation to perform it. Therefore, the rights of the heirs to inherit would be impaired by financing this trip. Secondly, voluntary acts of worship must be performed by the person himself; the logic being that obedience can only be shown when a person has chosen to do something.

¹ Bayhaqī, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 4:329.

² Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, 7:62–65.

CONCLUSION

For believers success lies only in following the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunna. Although in theory this is a simple concept, yet it can be extremely difficult in practice. The difficulty in following the Qur'an and Sunna lies in understanding it. Readers who are familiar with the primary sources of Islam will know that navigating through intricate labyrinths of hermeneutics and various narrations of prophetic traditions is no easy task. It is therefore imperative to follow qualified juristic opinions. This treatise shows the different scholastic views, sometimes showing the agreement of the jurists and at times highlighting the contra-distinctions. The different opinions show two things:

1. The great diversity of opinions all resulting from different hermeneutical understandings of the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet ﷺ;
2. The different scholastic opinions must nurture tolerance toward other Muslims who may be following another opinion.

The central focus of every person who has lost a loved one is the endeavour to pray and wish that the deceased is at peace with Allāh. At times the determination to help the deceased translates into performing exaggerated forms of worship or spiritual acts fused with cultural demands and practices that really do not have a sound basis in Islam. Therefore, it is important to follow the guidelines of the Qur'an, Sunna and opinions of classical jurists in order to ensure that exaggeration and innovation are avoided.

I seriously advise people wishing to help their departed loved ones not only to observe physical-spiritual worship such as reciting the Qur'an and supplication, but also to donate money to charitable

causes on behalf of the deceased, such as building a mosque, building a well, or the like. This type of charity will act as a perpetual source of good deeds and the deceased will benefit enormously from this.

It is also important to learn to be tolerant toward different opinions and practices prevalent in various Muslim societies. It is easy to dismiss certain practices due to the limited understanding one may have about such practices or their evidences. Many views mentioned in this book of the classical scholars may sound peculiar but that does not mean that they are wrong or that these scholars were following their whims. Extending respect and polite disagreement is a healthy and productive attitude rather than ill-informed dismissive slogans of heresy, *bid'a*, deviance and the like. This type of accusation must be avoided.

Death is the natural process of life, designed by Allāh, the Creator, and there is no escape from it. Death is something to be feared yet something to look forward to. For the righteous it is an opportunity to meet their Lord, while for others, it is the time for their reckoning. It is imperative for Muslims to pray for a good ending for themselves and others. I pray to Allāh that He blesses all the Muslims who pass away, forgives them and grants them Paradise.

Appendix

QUR'ĀNIC CHAPTERS AND VERSES

I seek refuge in Allāh from Shaytan the Accursed.
I begin in the name of Allāh,
Most Gracious Most Merciful.

Sūra Yāsīn

(1) Yā Sīn. (2) By the Qur'an, full of wisdom, — (3) You are indeed one of the apostles, (4) On a straight way. (5) It is a revelation sent down by (Him), the Exalted in might, Most Merciful. (6) In order that you may admonish a people, whose fathers had received no admonition, and who therefore remain heedless. (7) The word is proved true against the greater part of them: for they do not believe. (8) We have put yokes around their necks right up to their chins, so that their heads are forced up. (9) And We have put a bar in front of them and a bar behind them, and further, We have covered them up; so that they cannot see. (10) The same is it to them whether you admonish them or you do not admonish them: they will not believe. (11) You cannot but admonish one who follows the message and fears the (Lord) Most Gracious, unseen: give such a one, therefore, good tidings, of forgiveness and a reward most generous. (12) Verily We shall give life to the dead, and We record what they send before and what they leave behind, and of all things have We taken account in a clear book. (13) Set forth to them, by way of a parable, the (story of) the companions of the city. Behold!, there came apostles to it. (14) When We sent to them two apostles, they rejected them: But We strengthened them with a third: they said, "Truly, we have been sent on a mission to you." (15) The (people) said: "You are only men like ourselves; and (Allāh) Most Gracious sends no sort of revelation: you do nothing but lie." (16) They said: "Our Lord knows that we have been sent on a mission to you: (17) "And our duty is only to proclaim the clear message." (18) The (people) said: "for us, we augur an evil

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سُورَةُ يُس

يُس ١ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ ٢ إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ٣ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ٤ تَنْزِيلَ الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ ٥ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ آبَاؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَافِلُونَ ٦ لَقَدْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلَى أَكْثَرِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٧ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِيْ أَعْنَاقِهِمْ أَغْلَالًا فَهِيَ إِلَى الْأَذْقَانِ فَهُمْ مُّقْمَحُونَ ٨ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ٩ وَسَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ١٠ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الذِّكْرَ وَخَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ الْغَيْبَ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ وَأَجْرٍ كَرِيمٍ ١١ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ١٢ وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَّثَلًا أَصْحَابَ الْقَرْيَةِ إِذْ جَاءَهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ١٣ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا إِلَيْكُم مُّرْسَلُونَ ١٤ قَالُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَمَا أَنْزَلَ الرَّحْمَنُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَكْذِبُونَ ١٥ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّا إِلَيْكُم لَمُرْسَلُونَ ١٦ وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ١٧ قَالُوا إِنَّا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُم مِّنَّا

omen from you: if you desist not, we will certainly stone you. And a grievous punishment indeed will be inflicted on you by us." (19) They said: "Your evil omens are with yourselves. If you are admonished? Nay, but you are a people transgressing all bounds!" (20) Then there came running, from the farthest part of the city, a man, saying, "O my people! Obey the apostles: (21) Obey those who ask no reward of you, and who have themselves received guidance. (22) It would not be reasonable for me if I did not serve Him who created me, and to whom you shall be brought back. (23) Shall I take gods besides Him? If (Allāh) Most Gracious should intend some adversity for me, of no use whatever will be their intercession for me, nor can they deliver me. (24) I would indeed, if I were to do so, be in manifest error. (25) For me, I have faith in your Lord: listen, then, to me!" (26) It was said: "Enter you the Garden." He said: "Ah me! Would that my people knew! (27) For that my Lord has granted me forgiveness and has enrolled me among those held in honour!" (28) And We sent not down against his people, after him, any hosts from heaven, nor was it needful for Us so to do. (29) It was no more than a single mighty blast, and behold! they were (like ashes) quenched and silent. (30) Ah! Alas for (My) servants! There comes not an apostle to them but they mock him! (31) See they not how many generations before them we destroyed? Not to them will they return: (32) But each one of them will be brought before Us (for judgment). (33) A sign for them is the earth that is dead: We give it life, and produce grain therefrom, of which you eat. (34) And We produce therein orchards with date-palms and vines, and We cause springs to gush forth therein: (35) That they may enjoy the fruits of this: It was not their hands that made this: will they not then give thanks? (36) Glory to Allāh who created in pairs all things that the earth produces, as well as their own kind and (other) things of which they have no knowledge. (37) And a sign for them is the night: We withdraw therefrom the day, and behold they are plunged in darkness; (38) And the sun runs its

عَذَابُ آلِيمٍ ﴿١٨﴾ قَالُوا طَائِرُكُمْ مَعَكُمْ أَإِنْ ذُكِّرْتُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَاقَوْمِ اتَّبِعُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ اتَّبِعُوا مَنْ لَا يَسْأَلُكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَا لِيَ لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ أَأَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنْ يُرِدْنِ الرَّحْمَنُ بِضُرٍّ لَا تُغْنِي عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنْقِذُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾ إِنْ إِذَا لَفِي ضَلَلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنِّي آمَنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمِعُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾ قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَلَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ جُندٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا كُنَّا مُنْزِلِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خُمُودُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ يُحَسِّرُهُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَإِنْ كُلُّ لَمَّا جَمِيعٌ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيِّتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَاتٍ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ وَفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعُيُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾ لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ اللَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُمْ مُظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿٣٨﴾

course for a period determined for it: that is the decree of (Him), the Exalted in might, the All-Knowing. (39) And the noon,—We have measured for her mansions (to traverse) till she returns like the old lower part of a date-stalk. (40) It is not permitted for the sun to catch up the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day: each swims along in orbit. (41) And a sign for them is that We bore their race in the loaded ark; (42) And We have created for them similar (vessels) on which they ride. (43) If it were Our will, We could drown them: then would there be no helper, nor could they be delivered, (44) Except by way of mercy from Us, and by way of convenience for a time. (45) When they are told, "Fear that which is before you and that which will be after you, in order that you may receive mercy," (they turn back). (46) Not a sign comes to them from among the signs of their Lord, but they turn away therefrom. (47) And when they are told, "Spend of (the bounties) with which Allāh has provided you," the unbelievers say to those who believe: "Shall we then feed those whom, if Allāh had so willed, He would have fed?—You are in nothing but manifest error." (48) Further, they say, "When will this promise (come to pass), if what you say is true?" (49) They will not wait for aught but a single blast: it will seize them while they are yet disputing among themselves! (50) No (chance) will they then have, by will, to dispose (of their affairs), nor to return to their own people! (51) The trumpet shall be sounded, when behold! from the sepulchres (men) will rush forth to their Lord! (52) They will say: "Ah! Woe unto us! Who raised us up from our beds of repose?" (A voice will say:) "This is what (Allāh) Most Gracious had promised. And true was the word of the apostles!" (53) It will be no more than a single blast, when lo! they will all be brought up before Us! (54) Then, on that day, not a soul will be wronged in the least, and you shall be repaid the meeds of your past deeds. (55) Verily the companions of the Garden shall that day have joy in all that they do; (56) They and their associates will be in groves of shade, reclining on thrones;

وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَرْنَاهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ ۚ لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ ۚ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ۝ وَإِنَّ لَهُمْ لَنَا مِثْلَهُ مَا يَرَكْبُونَ ۚ وَإِنْ نَشَاءُ نُغْرِقْهُمْ فَلَا صَرِيخَ لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْقَذُونَ ۚ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَمَتَاعًا إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّقُوا مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝ وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ انْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ قَالُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْطَعِمُ مَنْ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ۝ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝ مَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ۝ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۝ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ ۝ قَالُوا يُوَيْلَنَا مَنْ بَعَثَنَا مِنْ مَرْقَدِنَا ۚ هَذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ۝ إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ۝ فَالْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝ إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغْلٍ فَاكِهُونَ ۝ هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلِّ عَلَى الْأَرْبَابِ مُتَكِئُونَ ۝ لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدَّعُونَ ۝ سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا

(57) (Every) fruit will be there for them; they shall have whatever they call for; (58) "Peace!"—a word (of salutation) from a Lord Most Merciful! (59) And O you in sin! Be apart this day! (60) Did I not enjoin on you, O Children of Ādam, that you should not worship Satan; for that he was to you an enemy avowed?—(61) And that you should worship Me, (for that) this was the straight way? (62) But he lead astray a great multitude of you. Did you not, then, understand? (63) This is the Hell of which you were (repeatedly) warned! (64) Embrace the (fire) this day, for that you (persistently) rejected (truth). (65) That day shall We set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to us, and their feet bear witness, to all that they did. (66) If it had been our will, We could surely have blotted out their eyes; then should they have run about groping for the path, but how could they have seen? (67) And if it had been Our will, We could have transformed them (to remain) in their places; then should they have been unable to move about, nor could they have returned. (68) If We grant long life to any, We cause him to be reversed in nature: Will they not then understand? (69) We have not instructed the (Prophet) in poetry, nor is it meet for him: this is no less than a message and a Qur'an making things clear: (70) That it may give admonition to any (who are) alive, and that the charge may be proved against those who reject (truth). (71) See they not that it is We who have created for them—among the things which Our hands have fashioned—cattle, which are under their dominion? (72) And that We have subjected them to their (use)? Of them some do carry them and some they eat: (73) And they have (other) profits from them, and they get (milk) to drink. Will they not then be grateful? (74) Yet they take gods other than Allāh, (hoping) that they might be helped! (75) They have not the power to help them: but they will be brought up as a troop (to be condemned). (76) Let not their speech, then, grieve you. Verily We know what they hide as well as what they disclose. (77) Does not man see that it is We who created him from sperm? yet

مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ ۝۵۸ وَامْتَارُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمَجْرُمُونَ ۝۵۹ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَبْنَىٰ أَدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ۝۶۰ وَإِنْ اعْبُدُونِيْ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ۝۶۱ وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا أَفَلَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْقِلُونَ ۝۶۲ هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ۝۶۳ إِصْلَوْهَا الْيَوْمَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ۝۶۴ الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝۶۵ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَطَمَسْنَا عَلَىٰ أَعْيُنِهِمْ فَاسْتَبَقُوا الصِّرَاطَ فَأَنَّىٰ يُبْصِرُونَ ۝۶۶ وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَمَسَخْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِهِمْ فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مُضِيًّا وَلَا يَرْجِعُونَ ۝۶۷ وَمَنْ نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ۝۶۸ وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْآنٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝۶۹ لِيُنذِرَ مَنْ كَانَ حَيًّا وَيَحِقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ۝۷۰ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِّمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَامًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَالِكُونَ ۝۷۱ وَذَلَّلْنَاهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ ۝۷۲ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ وَمَشَارِبُ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ ۝۷۳ وَاتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يُنْصَرُونَ ۝۷۴ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُمْ جُنْدٌ مُّحْضَرُونَ ۝۷۵ فَلَا يَخْزِنَكَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّا نَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ۝۷۶ أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُّطْقَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝۷۷ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ ۝۷۸ قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي

behold! he (stands forth) as an open adversary! (78) And he makes comparisons for Us, and forgets his own creation: He says, "Who can give life to (dry) bones and decomposed ones (at that)?" (79) Say, "He will give them life who created them for the first time! for He is well-versed in every kind of creation! (80) The same who produces for you fire out of the green tree, when behold! you kindle therewith (your own fires)! (81) Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof?" — Yes, indeed! for He is the Creator Supreme, of skill and knowledge (infinite)! (82) Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is, "be," and it is! (83) So glory to Him in whose hands is the dominion of all things: and to Him will you be all brought back.

Sūrat al-Fātiḥa

(1) Praise be to Allāh, the Sustainer of the worlds; (2) Most Gracious, Most Merciful; (3) Master of the Day of Judgment. (4) You do we worship, and Your aid we seek. (5) Show us the straight way, (6) The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your grace, (7) those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.

Opening Verses of Sūrat al-Baqara

(1) Alif Lām Mīm (2) This is the book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allāh. (3) Who believe in the unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; (4) And who believe in the revelation sent to you, and sent before your time, and have the assurance of the Hereafter. (5) They are on guidance, from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.

أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٨﴾ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ الشَّجَرِ الْأَخْضَرِ نَارًا فَإِذَا أَنتُم مِّنْهُ تُوقَدُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَىٰ أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ ۚ بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٠﴾ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَن يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٨١﴾ فَسُبْحَنَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١﴾ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٣﴾ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٤﴾ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٥﴾ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٦﴾

بِدَايَةُ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ

الْم ﴿١﴾ ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ۖ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥﴾

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سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١﴾ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٣﴾ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٤﴾ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٥﴾ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٦﴾

بِدَايَةُ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ

الَمْ ﴿١﴾ ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۚ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥﴾

Final Verses of Sūrat al-Baqara

(285) The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one believes in Allāh, His angels, His books, and His apostles. "We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His apostles." And they say: "We hear, and we obey: (We seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the end of all journeys." (286) On no soul does Allāh place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray:) "Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You laid on those before us; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our protector; Help us against those who stand against faith."

Āyat al-Kursī (Sūrat al-Baqara)

(255) Allāh. There is no god but He, the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there that can intercede in His presence except as He permits? He knows what is before them and what is behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme.

خَوَاتِيمُ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ

أَمَّنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَلَيْكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا
سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾ لَا يُكَلِّفُ
اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا
لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا
كََمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا
بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا
عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

آيَةُ الْكُرْسِيِّ

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ
مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا
بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ
مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا
يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾

(1) Blessed be He in whose hands is dominion; who has power over all things; (2) He who created death and life, that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in might, Oft-Forgiving; (3) He who created the seven heavens one above another: No want of proportion will you see in the creation of (Allāh) Most Gracious. So turn your vision again: see you any flaw? (4) Again turn your vision a second time: (your) vision will come back to you discomfited, in a state worn out. (5) And we have adorned the lowest heaven with lamps, and We have made such (as) missiles to drive away the evil ones, and have prepared for them the penalty of the blazing fire. (6) For those who reject their Lord is the penalty of Hell: and evil is (such), destination. (7) When they are cast therein, they will hear the (terrible) drawing in of its breath even as it blazes forth, (8) Almost bursting with fury: Every time a group is cast therein, its keepers will ask, "Did no warner come to you?" (9) They will say: "Yes indeed; a warner did come to us, but we rejected him and said, '(Allāh) never sent down any (message): you are nothing but an egregious delusion!'" (10) They will further say: "Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we should not be among the companions of the blazing fire!" (11) They will then confess their sins: but far will be (forgiveness) from the companions of the blazing fire! (12) As for those who fear their Lord unseen, for them is forgiveness and a great reward. (13) And whether you hide your word or publish it, He certainly has (full) knowledge, of the secrets of (all) hearts. (14) Should He not know, He that created? and He is the one that understands the finest mysteries (and) is well-acquainted (with them). (15) It is He who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse you through its tracts and enjoy of the sustenance that He furnishes: but unto Him is the resurrection. (16) Do you feel secure that He who is in heaven will not

تَبْرَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝ (1) الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ۝ (2) الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۚ مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَوُّتٍ ۚ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ ۝ (3) ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ۝ (4) وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ ۝ (5) وَلِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَيَبْتَئَسُ الْمُصِيرُ ۝ (6) إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ۝ (7) تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۚ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ ۝ (8) قَالُوا بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ كَبِيرٍ ۝ (9) وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ۝ (10) فَاعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَسُحْقًا لِأَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ۝ (11) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ۝ (12) وَأَسِرُوا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝ (13) أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ ۚ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ۝ (14) هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذُلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ ۚ ذَالِيهِ النُّشُورُ ۝ (15) ءَأَمِنْتُمْ مِّنْ فِي

cause you to be swallowed up by the earth when it shakes? (17) Or do you feel secure that He who is in heaven will not send against you a violent tornado, so that you shall know how (terrible) was My warning? (18) But indeed men before them rejected (My warning): then how (terrible) was My rejection (of them)? (19) Do they not observe the birds above them, spreading their wings and folding them in? None can uphold them except (Allāh) Most Gracious: Truly it is He who watches over all things. (20) Nay, who is there that can help you, (even as) an army, besides (Allāh) Most Merciful? In nothing but delusion are the unbelievers. (21) Or who is there that can provide you with sustenance if He were to withhold His provision? Nay, they obstinately persist in insolent impiety and flight (from the truth). (22) Is then one who walks headlong, with his face grovelling, better guided, or one who walks evenly on a straight way? (23) Say: "It is He who has created you, and made for you the faculties of hearing, seeing, feeling and understanding: little thanks it is you give. (24) Say: "It is He who has multiplied you through the earth, and to Him shall you be gathered together." (25) They ask: When will this promise be (fulfilled)?—If you are telling the truth. (26) Say: "As to the knowledge of the time, it is with Allāh alone: I am (sent) only to warn plainly in public." (27) At length, when they see it close at hand, grieved will be the faces of the unbelievers, and it will be said (to them): "This is (the promise fulfilled), which you were calling for!" (28) Say: "See, if Allāh were to destroy me, and those with me, or if He bestows His mercy on us, yet who can deliver the unbelievers from a grievous penalty?" (29) Say: "He is (Allāh) Most Gracious: We have believed in Him, and on Him have we put our trust: So, soon will you know which (of us) it is that is in manifest error." (30) Say: "See, if your stream be some morning lost (in the earth), who then can supply you with clear-flowing water?"

السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ﴿١٧﴾ أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَنِ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ نَذِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾ وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَفْتٍ وَيَقْبِضْنَ مَا يُمَسِّكُهُنَّ إِلَّا الرَّحْمَنُ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ أَمِنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ جُنْدٌ لَكُمْ يَنْصَرُّكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنِ الْكَافِرُونَ إِلَّا فِي غُرُورٍ ﴿٢١﴾ أَمِنْ هَذَا الَّذِي يَرْزُقُكُمْ إِنْ أَمْسَكَ رِزْقَهُ بَلْ لَجُوا فِي عُتُوٍّ وَنُفُورٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ أَفَمَنْ يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَى وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَى أَمَّنْ يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ زُلْفَةً سَيِّئَتْ وُجُوهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقِيلَ هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكْنِي اللَّهُ وَمَنْ مَعِيَ أَوْ رَحِمَنَا فَمَنْ يُجِيرُ الْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابِ إِلِيمٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ أَمَّنَّا بِهِ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِمَاءٍ مَعِينٍ ﴿٣١﴾

Sūrat al-Takāthur

(1) The mutual rivalry for piling up (more) diverts you, (2) Until you visit the graves. (3) But nay, you soon shall know. (4) Again, you soon shall know! (5) Nay, were you to know with certainty of mind, (6) you shall certainly see Hell-Fire! (7) Again, you shall see it with certainty of sight! (8) Then, shall you be questioned that day about the joy (you indulged in!).

Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ

(1) Say: He is Allāh, the One and Only; (2) Allāh, the Eternal, Absolute; (3) He begets not, nor is He begotten; (4) And there is none like unto Him.

Sūrat al-Falaq

(1) Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of the dawn (2) From the mischief of created things; (3) From the mischief of darkness as it overspreads; (4) From the mischief of witches when they blow on knots; (5) And from the mischief of the envious as he practises envy.

Sūrat al-Nās

(1) Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, (2) The King of mankind, (3) The God of mankind, (4) From the mischief of the whisperer, who withdraws, (5) Who whispers into the hearts of mankind, (6) Among jinns and among men.

سُورَةُ التَّكَاثُرِ

الْهَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ① حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ② كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ③ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ④ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ⑤ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ⑥ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ⑦ ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ⑧

سُورَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ① اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ② لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ③ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ④

سُورَةُ الْفَلَقِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ① مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ② وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ③ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ④ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ⑤

سُورَةُ النَّاسِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ① مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ② إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ③ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ④ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ⑤ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ⑥

Sūrat al-Takāthur

(1) The mutual rivalry for piling up (more) diverts you, (2) Until you visit the graves. (3) But nay, you soon shall know. (4) Again, you soon shall know! (5) Nay, were you to know with certainty of mind, (6) you shall certainly see Hell-Fire! (7) Again, you shall see it with certainty of sight! (8) Then, shall you be questioned that day about the joy (you indulged in!).

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سُورَةُ التَّكَاثُرِ

الْهَكْمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ① حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ② كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ③ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ④ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ⑤ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ⑥ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ⑦ ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ⑧

سُورَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ① اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ② لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ③ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ④

سُورَةُ الْفَلَقِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ① مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ② وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ③ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ④ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ⑤

سُورَةُ النَّاسِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ① مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ② إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ③ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ④ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ⑤ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ⑥

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THIS IS A DETAILED, yet easily accessible, manual on what to do when someone dies. It covers the procedures due upon a person's death. The rites of preparing the body for burial, the bathing, the shrouding, and the procedure for funeral prayer, according to all four Sunnī schools, are discussed. Many important questions are answered. Is it permitted to transport the body abroad for burial? Can a headstone be placed on the grave? What can the heirs do for their deceased loved ones after burial? What are the etiquette for visiting graves? Is the posthumous donation of reward (*iṣāl al-thawāb*) permissible? Finally, how does one make atonements and expiations and settle debts on behalf of the deceased?

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